

# SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

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## PREFACE

There is today an outstanding need in sociology for more minute and comprehensive analyses of certain important phases of the social field than can be given in general sociological treatises or in the highly intensive studies in the special social sciences. The present study tries to do this for the neglected field of social institutions, the studies of which down to date, with one exception, have either been fragmentary and superficial, or highly specialized examinations of single institutions or closely related institutions. It seeks, in a comprehensive and systematic way, to get at the essential components of social institutions; to note certain aspects of their origin and evolution; to examine the way in which they develop their general and unique characteristics; to determine their connection with social values, the interplay between the individual and institutions, and the factors involved in their progressive adaptability.

Believing that the lines now drawn between the social sciences are largely arbitrary and artificial, and that an unfortunate departmental parochialism exists among them—whereas they are essentially a unity in which a division of labor is merely expedient—the author has not confined himself exclusively to the materials offered by sociology, but has drawn on all available pertinent sources. Furthermore, the materials herein presented are not intended for college students only; nor for sociologists particularly; but for all those who have an interest in social institutions, whether this interest is that of the social scientist or that of a member of one of the professions connected with institutions, or that of the intelligent layman who has a broad interest in all things social and who wishes to under-

stand their nature and operation. The needs and interests of these various groups have been kept in mind in the preparation of this book.

Acknowledgment must first of all be made for much valuable assistance received from that monumental and epoch-making work, which all students of social institutions must henceforth heed, "The Science of Society," by William Graham Sumner and Albert Galloway Keller. Not only have many general principles and conclusions regarding social institutions been obtained from this work, but also an infinite number of valuable, concrete facts. Indebtedness must also be expressed to Prof. Ernest R. Groves, of the University of North Carolina, who made several suggestions regarding content that have been carried out; to my colleague, Prof. Hutton Webster, who read the manuscript in one of its earlier stages and gave valuable criticism; to my graduate seminar of 1927-1928; and to several friends who have discussed the field and materials with me. Greatest of all, however, is my obligation to my wife for her never-failing, sustaining encouragement, her constructive criticism, and other innumerable, kindly aids.

J. O. HERTZLER.

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# SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

## CHAPTER I

### THE SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO THE MEANING AND PLACE OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

#### 1. THE NEGLECT OF A COORDINATED STUDY OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The term "social institution" is not only used by the social scientists but is one widely used in our daily speech and in our current literature. In the main, however, its usages are not precise. Where these usages are fairly definite, they are frequently at considerable variance with each other. There is also much reason to believe that the term is used in referring to products of social evolution that are not institutions, though to the casual observer the distinctions may not be clear. Particularly serious is the fact that the various important available ideas and implications in the field of the theory of social institutions, as viewed by the social scientists, are now more or less vague, scattered, and uncorrelated. Assumptions underlie the treatments which are not clearly formulated and stated, hence the term is loosely used; or else there is such a variety of uses of the term among the social scientists that he among them who tries to be fairly exact and consistent in his thinking has nothing very reliable to work with. A considerable amount of confusion, therefore, still exists regarding these very important social elements.

Furthermore, much time has been consumed in making searching and extensive analyses and investigations, and much printed matter has been devoted to extensive discussions of various specific social institutions in both their

structural and functional aspects among both primitive and civilized peoples, as, for example, religious institutions, the state, marriage and the family, economic institutions, law, and language. Little, however, has been done to obtain a comprehensive view of institutions as a whole, to place the concept upon a secure scientific basis, or to analyze their common basic principles.

Sociology as the science of society is obliged to analyze the organization of society and the agencies through which it functions. As such, it is forced to consider social institutions, for they are among the most essential elements in proper group functioning. Every feature of society which comprehends the action of a group of individuals represents or involves an institution. No one can claim to be a social scientist unless he has an understanding of the nature, functioning, and effects of social institutions.

The major portion of this study is devoted to an examination of the causes and functions of institutions, their component parts, the chief fields in which they operate, some important features of their development, the bases of their social authority, the means of their transmission, their relationship to the individuals composing them, and the situation regarding their adaptability and modification, in an attempt partially to satisfy some of these deficiencies.

## 2. THE DEFINITIONS OF INSTITUTIONS AS EVIDENCE OF LACK OF COORDINATION IN THE USAGE OF TERM

The lack of precision regarding the concept "social institution" is evidenced in the definitions, which carry various shadings of meaning and various emphases, as well as invariably containing elements the meanings of which are often vague. While some of this confusion is a result of the extraordinary variability of every class of social objects and relations, as well as of the inaccurate and unstandardized terms used in definition, there is also much diversity that can only be accounted for on the ground of dissimilarity of the concepts of institutions. Hobhouse

says that "The term is so variously used that it is doubtful if it has a single root meaning common to all its applications."<sup>1</sup> Some of the better known and typical definitions or statements explanatory of the nature of institutions follow:

Ward makes the grandiose statement that "Human institutions are all the means that have come into existence for the control and utilization of the social energy."<sup>2</sup> Park is equally inexplicit when he refers to an institution as "A section of corporate human nature plus the machinery and the instrumentalities through which that human nature operates."<sup>3</sup> In trying to get at a common element among the various so-called institutions, Hobhouse, to refer to him again, says:

Perhaps we get nearest to such a common element if we regard an institution as the whole or any part of the established and recognized apparatus of social life—whether the life of the community as a whole or some special part of it.<sup>4</sup>

After examining the characteristics of several typical and generally accepted social institutions, he says:

The term institution then covers (1) recognized and established usages governing certain relations of men, (2) an entire complex of such usages and the principles governing it, and (3) the organization (if such exists) supporting such a complex. On the one side the reference is to certain relations between human beings; on the other to human beings themselves united by the fulfillment of some particular function.<sup>5</sup>

Hetherington and Muirhead, in similar vein, say:

The word (*i.e.* "institution") in its wider sense stands, not only for a form of social union but for the modes or organs through which forms of Society operate.

In further elucidation they emphasize the nature of institutions as willed entities created to meet conscious social ends and purposes, when they say:

<sup>1</sup> HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Social Development," p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> WARD, L. F., "Pure Sociology," p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> PARK, R. E., "The City," etc. *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. XX, March, 1915, p. 577.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

It is an organization created and sustained by individual wills, and equally creating and sustaining them. An institution as the creation of will is an objectified purpose, the embodiment in external form of an end which some group of individuals has proposed to itself.<sup>1</sup>

Hayes carries this conception a step further when he says:

An institution is the idea of a set of overt activities together with a twofold judgment lodged in the popular mind; namely, a judgment that the result which the institutionalized activities attain is necessary or greatly to be desired, and, that given activities are so well adapted to securing that result that they should be prized, defended, perpetuated, and, if need be, enforced.

A little farther on he says that "An institution is a set of activities which a society adopts as its deliberately accepted method of attaining a deliberately approved end."<sup>2</sup> Maciver says, "Institutions are forms of order established within social life by some common will." Again, "Every institution involves a certain social recognition or establishment and . . . nearly every institution possesses a certain permanence."<sup>3</sup>

"Institutions have organized forms of social activity, and have therefore an external aspect, an aspect in time and space . . . Institutions may be created either by definite associations or by community itself."<sup>4</sup>

Urwick less specifically states that the rather puzzling term "social institutions" "may be taken to mean any recognized and established embodiment, whether concrete or abstract, of some system of relationships or some method of social action."<sup>5</sup> Ross simply says "An institution is a grouping or relation that is sanctioned by society. The actual may or may not conform to the sanctioned."<sup>6</sup> Thomas and Znaniecki hold that social institutions are "a certain number of more or less connected and harmoni-

<sup>1</sup> HETHERINGTON, H. J. W., and J. H. MUIRHEAD, "Social Purpose," p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> HAYES, E. C., "Introduction to the Study of Sociology," p. 405.

<sup>3</sup> MACIVER, R. M., "Community" (rev.) pp. 153, 154.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>5</sup> URWICK, E. J., "A Philosophy of Social Progress," p. 31

<sup>6</sup> ROSS, E. A., "Foundations of Sociology," p. 88.



ous systems of action."<sup>1</sup> Bernard, in crystallizing his ideas, says "They are simply the relatively permanent and formal ways in which people behave or act in making their collective adjustments to nature and to others of their kind." Again, "The institution is a cooperative method of collective endeavor or social organization."<sup>2</sup>

Some of the sociologists whose approach is through the avenue of social psychology, reflect the social psychological point of view in their definitions of social institutions. Cooley, for example, contends that:

An institution is simply a definite and established phase of the public mind, not different in its ultimate nature from public opinion, though often seeming, on account of its permanence and visible customs and symbols in which it is clothed, to have a somewhat distinct and independent existence.<sup>3</sup>

Ellwood in defining them says:

Social institutions are simply social habits which are systematized, instituted or established by groups, and have still stronger sanctions attached to them than do simple customs. They carry a step further the establishment of the social habit through the exercise of authority or compulsion on the part of a group.

Again:

Institutions may be defined as habitual ways of living together which have been sanctioned, systematized, and established by the authority of communities <sup>4</sup>

Sumner and Keller refer to the institution as "a framework of disciplinary habit."<sup>5</sup> Hayes in a later statement says that:

Any social activity that can be called an institution is essentially a set of ideas and feelings that prevail in a society and that go over into overt conduct when occasion arises together with a prevalent habitual

<sup>1</sup> THOMAS, W. I., and F. ZNANIECKI, "The Polish Peasant in Europe and America," Vol. I, (2-volume edition) p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> BERNARD, L. L., "Introduction to Social Psychology," p. 565.

<sup>3</sup> COOLEY, C. H., "Social Organization," p. 313.

<sup>4</sup> ELLWOOD, C. A., "Psychology of Human Society," pp. 90-91.

<sup>5</sup> SUMNER, W. G., and KELLER, A. G., "The Science of Society," Vol. II, p. 1480.

disposition to these activities. Fundamentally institutions are states of mind.<sup>1</sup>

. . . from the viewpoint of natural science, the institution is not a substantive concept at all. That which the sociologist calls an "Institution" is from the psychologist's standpoint "merely similar and reciprocal habits of individual behavior, together with tools which individuals have constructed for carrying them out."<sup>2</sup>

Again he says:

Psychologically the institution consists of a large number of similar and reciprocating habits of individuals. These habits, like others, have been acquired slowly and are difficult to change except through gradual re-learning.<sup>3</sup>

On the next page he further bears out this contention when he states:

They are in fact merely complex modifications of original responses, and are developed in the process of adapting to the world of natural objects mainly through and with the help of one's fellow men.<sup>4</sup>

Kantor, the psychologist, in seeking to make institutions the basis of a social psychology, presents a point of view even more diverse. He says "A behavior institution is a reaction or system of reactions of various individuals or groups to particular types of stimuli."<sup>5</sup> In a later article he develops the idea another step.

An institution is a common stimulus, that is to say, any object or situation the contact with which results in the building up and later operation of conventional and conformity responses. An institution is then nothing more nor less than a stimulus in exactly the same sense as any object in any other department of psychology. An institution is an inviter to action, both in the sense of acquiring a response and in prompting it to operate after its acquisition . . . Institutions differ from other stimuli merely in the kind of functional properties which they have.

<sup>1</sup> HAYES, E. C., "What is an Institution?" *Scientific Monthly*, Vol. XXIII, December, 1926, pp. 556-557.

<sup>2</sup> ALLPORT, F. H., "The Nature of Institutions," *Social Forces*, Vol. VI, December, 1927, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>5</sup> KANTOR, J. R., "An Essay toward an Institutional Conception of Social Psychology," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. XXVII, May, 1922, p. 765.

They differ from other stimuli in calling out conformity and conventional responses . . . Each person reacts to it in an ingrained common fashion.<sup>1</sup>

It will be noted that the approaches to these definitions are from different angles. While this adds to the confusion and indefiniteness it indicates how essential and widely used the concept is in social thinking. Although no definition gives precisely the same, and in many cases not even approximately the same, conception of social institution, it is true that two or more do agree, expressly or by implication, on one or more particulars. This enables us to draw up some sort of a composite sociological conception which we will use tentatively as the basis for our discussion until we have analyzed institutions more in detail.

Thus institutions are (1) "ways in which a people behave or act," "apparatus of social life," "modes or organs," "forms of order," "systems of action"; (2) "well-adapted" for fulfilling socially necessary or desirable ends ("deliberately approved ends"), or for carrying on "some particular function" in the community as a whole or some special part of it; (3) taking the form of "usages (or complexes thereof) governing certain social relations of men," or "organized forms of social activity," or "systems of relationship," "groupings," "sets of activities"; or, if social psychologically expressed, taking the form of "definite and established phases of the public mind" or "states of mind"; (4) made "relatively permanent and formal," "recognized and established," "sanctioned," "systematized," "prized, defended, perpetuated, and if need be enforced"; (5) "by the authority of communities," or "by some common will," or "by groups," or "by society"; and (6) concretely expressed in "social habits," "overt activities," and "similar and reciprocal habits of individual behavior."

<sup>1</sup> KANTOR, J. R., "The Institutional Foundation of a Scientific Social Psychology," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. XXIX, May, 1924, pp. 680-681.

### 3. THE PLACE OF INSTITUTIONS IN SOCIAL THEORY

Before going any farther, however, it is necessary to locate institutions in the field of social theory.<sup>1</sup> Society is a vast complex of innumerable elements, causally and reciprocally interrelated. These the theorist must segregate for purposes of analysis and treatment and arrange in some order, if he is to determine their nature and function in the social scheme.

Logically, social theory, like theory in any other sphere of life, must begin with forces. The *social forces* continually cause, condition, and stimulate human and social phenomena. Here must be considered the physical forces such as the physical environment in all its aspects, and the various phases of biological heredity, both of which, in a measure, determine or condition the reactions of individuals and groups. The psychic forces in the form of reflexes, prepotent impulses, habit tendencies, emotions, desires and interests, and intellect are even more important. Still more significant are the group forces, such as the various attitudes, culture patterns, and controls imbedded in the social heritage.

The various social forces work themselves out through the scheme of social evolution, which we more technically refer to as the *social process and the specific processes that compose it* such as socialization, association, opposition, stimulation, social control, organization of effort, will and thought, selection, expansion, institutionalization, ossification, decadence, and reshaping.<sup>2</sup> Here social theory deals

<sup>1</sup> For statements of the primary purpose of social theory see HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Metaphysical Theory of the State," p. 12; HERTZLER, J. O., "Social Progress," preface; ODUM, H. W., Editorial in *J. Social Forces*, Vol. II, January, 1924, pp. 282, 284.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. COOLEY, C. H., "Social Process," ROSS, E. A., "Principles of Sociology," Pt. III, and "Foundations of Sociology," pp. 91-99; SMALL, A. W., "General Sociology," pp. 3-22, 189-241, 501-523, 619-639; CASE, C. M., "Outlines of Introductory Sociology," pp. 415-428; LICHTENBERGER, J. P., "Development of Social Theory," pp. 440-464; ELMER, M. C., "Interpreting Social Process," *J. Applied Sociology*, January, 1927, pp. 247-251.

with the adaptive working, the incessant reactions and activities, the continuous operative aspect of society with its differentiated and reciprocal mechanisms, the whole occurring according to the basic principles of social mechanics.

The processes continually give rise to a vast array of *social products*, including all the various societies, publics, social strata, communities, associations, organizations and other structures and culture complexes, with all their peculiar uniformities, standards, traditions, conventions, customs, laws, machinery and other cultural elements. Among the most important of the social products are social institutions, because they contain, cut across, or functionally represent almost all the others. The mistake must not be made, however, of thinking of these institutions and the other forms mentioned as products only, for they are also agents of and media for the expression of social processes, and a means of stabilizing them.

It must be remembered that any such array of societal elements is for purposes of understanding only, and does not give a picture of the social order in operation. Actually forces, processes, and products are in continual and inextricable interplay, mutually affecting each other in innumerable ways.

#### 4. THE RELATION OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO THE CHIEF FORMS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

After having established the relative position of institutions in the field of social theory, it is necessary next to show their relation to those social products that constitute the chief forms of social organization. For institutions, being both products of and factors in social processes, must of necessity be intimately and vitally involved in social organization.

The commonly used term "social organization" refers in the last analysis to the nature and form of the social order. In the word is implied both the concept of social groupings and the social order in its operative aspect. As such, it is concerned with the sum total of those interactions and interrelations, direct and indirect, that are

continuous and universal, though not necessarily permanent, among human beings. The forms which it takes involve various specific social activities and more or less determinate social groupings, which in turn grow out of the interactions between individuals, between individuals and the groups to which they belong, between groups themselves and between different activities and interests in which individuals and groups participate.<sup>1</sup> Social organization is a matter of diverse and specialized social parts, the distribution of social functions, the mutual service and support of the parts, their solidarity, and their functionings. More concretely it has to do with the various operative and structural forms which social life takes—its types, processes, and organization that insure orderly and consistent operation. Among many primitive peoples social organization consists mainly of rather definitely composed kinship groups; among civilized peoples it includes a vast complex of interdependent primary and derivative group forms. Certain of these are structural forms that are constantly mentioned in connection with social institutions. Some clarification of their express nature and their relation to institutions is necessary. Distinction must particularly be made between society, community, and association.

A society is the most inclusive grouping of all, and embraces the other forms. It is loosely organized, and is made up of both direct and indirect social contact groups, each possessing its own specific types of organization. It is not confined exclusively to any particular geographical area, as would be a population. It has a relatively permanent, or at least continuous, existence covering a considerable period of time.<sup>2</sup> The other groupings, such as publics,

<sup>1</sup> ELDRIDGE, S., in DAVIS, J. and H. E. BARNES, "An Introduction to Sociology," p. 596.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. PARK, R. E., and E. W. BURGESS, "Introduction to the Science of Sociology," pp. 160-161; 1920, BERNARD, L. L., "Introduction to Social Psychology," p. 463. See also HANKINS, F. H., "An Introduction to the Science of Society," p. 444.

communities, associations, primary groups are phases of society. In fact, Bernard states, "All the groups . . . primary and derivative, of the direct or indirect contact type, together or any combination of them, constitute a society."<sup>1</sup> It is the sum total of the social instrumentalities that enable individuals to carry on life activities—activities that are, in turn, common, correlated, and mutually conditioning. Thus, the American people may be said to be a "society." At the same time in a somewhat narrower sense there may be a considerable array of societies within the society that is composed of the American people.<sup>2</sup> Park and Burgess, in fact, speak of society as "a constellation of other small societies," such, for example, as races, peoples, parties, factions, clubs, and cliques.

A public is a wholly indirect contact group based upon some consciousness of kind or similarity of purpose. It may be considered either as an indefinite separate group form, or as the medium for other indirect contacts. As illustrations might be mentioned common language groups, social and economic classes, religious, musical, scientific, and art publics.

A community is "a relatively vague group, lacking definite organization and agencies, and yet pervaded by common ideas and interests."<sup>3</sup> It is also a group in which the people concerned have common relationships. Usually a community is a social grouping considered from the point of view of the geographical distribution, whether great or limited, of the individuals and their agencies of living. It is particularly that social area in which direct or face-to-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 483.

<sup>2</sup> HAYES, E. C., "Introduction to the Study of Sociology," pp. 417-419, approaching the subject from a different angle, maintains that a society has three characteristics: (1) . . . its members have some important activity in common, such as a common language, a common creed, or some common practical aim and common activities by which their common aim is pursued"; (2) "the activities of its members causally condition each other" . . . ; (3) "intercommunication."

<sup>3</sup> HANKINS, F. H., *op. cit.*, p. 445. See also BERNARD, L. L., in DAVIS and BARNES, *op. cit.*, pp. 456-457.

face contacts are easily and commonly made. As Bernard points out, in the community practically every member is known personally to every other person; or, if he is not personally known, something is known about him. But contacts need not necessarily be personal. Ordinarily the individual will not belong to more than one community, except in the case where the smaller community of which he is a member is included in a larger of which he is also a member.<sup>1</sup> The community is distinguished from other areas of common life by a degree at least of distinctive common characteristics, local or territorial interests and activities. But all community is a matter of degree; it is usually confined to local groupings, such as village, or town, or city, or district, but it may conceivably apply under certain conditions to a state and even a nation, or a part of these.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that occasionally a society and a community may be identical, but usually the society is much more diverse and extensive.

Closely related to the community and in some cases identical with it are the primary groups. These are face-to-face organizations of individuals. The family is the most primary of all these groups; after it come the play groups, the neighborhood, school, church, occupational groups, and others in increasing degree of derivativeness.<sup>3</sup>

Associations are definite in form and essentially purposive in character; they are willed organizations of united human beings for the pursuit of common interests, or to carry on specific purposes, or perform specific social functions.<sup>4</sup> Through them the more permanent and specific types of social activity are coordinated. As Maciver says:

Every end which men seek is more easily attained for all when all whom it concerns unite to seek it, when all cooperate in seeking it.

<sup>1</sup> PARK and BURGESS, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. MACIVER, R. M., "Community," especially pp. 22-24.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. COOLEY, C. H., "Social Organization," p. 23ff; Bernard, *op. cit.*, p. 412ff.

<sup>4</sup> HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Social Development," pp. 49-50; MACIVER, *op. cit.*, p. 23.



Thus you may have an association corresponding to every possible interest of social beings.

Associations may be permanent or transient, face-to-face groups as well as indirect contact groups. Actually we have a great array of associations, as, for example, political parties, religious denominations, non-local associations for the advancement of science, literature, or the arts, industry, business partnerships, corporations, foundations, trade unions, federations of labor, educational, legal, recreational, philanthropic, or professional associations, even various public international unions, or the League of Nations.

At stated times their members or representatives of them, come together for the purpose of discussing matters of common interest or to vote on matters of policy relative to the welfare of the association and its members. The association condenses at intervals into face-to-face group or assemblies.<sup>1</sup>

Most associations have a definite administrative organization to carry on their function, but some of the most notable, for various reasons, dispense with this. Maciver in calling attention to additional aspects of associations says:

The members of one association may be members of many other and distinct associations. Within a community there may exist not only numerous associations, but also antagonistic associations. Men may associate for the least significant or for the most significant of purposes; the association may mean very much or very little to them, it may mean merely an excuse for a monthly dinner-party, or it may be the guardian of their dearest or highest interests.<sup>2</sup>

Thus it is seen that social organization may have all degrees of definiteness and concreteness ranging from societies with almost no organization and only the vaguest boundaries, to highly organized associations performing specific functions, or definite family or neighborhood groups.

<sup>1</sup> BERNARD, L. L., in DAVIS and BARNES, *op. cit.*, p. 456.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 24.

In these various human groupings human nature expresses itself, certain problems of successful living arise, and certain principles of action must guide and dominate the relationships and activities, else they are purposeless and meaningless. Certain forces are at work, certain operations are of necessity carried on. Order must be maintained, activities and forces must be regulated, functions must be performed. The very use of the word "organization" indicates that some ordering and operating is involved. Definite agencies must exist for doing this.

Institutions, because of the insistence with which they are maintained and the attachment that people of all culture stages and all historical epochs feel for them, obviously play a part in this complex of groups and relationships that is real and indispensable. They lie behind these organizational forms, grow out of them, operate in and through them, and in some cases are identified with them.<sup>1</sup> But what specific organizational functions do they perform?

To answer this question is not a simple task. The different kinds of social forms and functions are so interdependent and involved that any one of them, even the most important, tends to be concealed by the elaborate social system. It is for this reason that it is so difficult to define institutions, difficult to extract their essence from the other social forms with which they operate, and to discern the nature of their operation.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. HOUSE, F. N., "The Range of Social Theory," p. 333, when he states, "Social organization . . . is a matter of institutions, or, in other words, of socially approved "schemes" of joint or cooperative action, by which collective ends are pursued." See also THOMAS, W. I., and ZNANIECKI, F., "The Polish Peasant in Europe and America," Vol. II, (2-vol. edition) pp. 1127-1128.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE CAUSES AND FUNCTIONS OF INSTITUTIONS

#### 1. CAUSES OF INSTITUTIONS: COMPELLING INDIVIDUAL WANTS AND SOCIAL NEEDS

Any analysis of institutions that seeks to establish general principles underlying all or most of them must first go into the matter of their origins and causal factors. Here also even a partial survey of ideas shows considerable variation. This is partly due to the remote origins and consequently the practical impossibility of securing precise and verifiable evidence concerning most institutions, at least, the highly important ones,<sup>1</sup> and partly due to the fact that social change has so overlaid institutions with various customs, ceremonials, and fictions, as to obscure their original nature. The expressed theories as to origins are therefore a matter of sagacious and sober deduction on the basis of the largest possible number of facts, or they are a matter of logical construction, or they are based on researches regarding the earliest state of human society of which positive knowledge can be obtained, or they are the outcome of observation of contemporary primitive peoples. The persistence of institutions from ancient times points, however, to fundamental causes; and, it is possible, even probable, that new institutions are likewise due to fundamental causes.

<sup>1</sup> "Every institution—at least every institution that goes deeply into human life—has a long history, beginning perhaps before the emergence of humanity itself." HETHERINGTON and MUIRHEAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125. Sumner also points out that the origin of societal institutions "is always lost in mystery, because when the action begins the men are never conscious of historical action, or of the historical importance of what they are doing. When they become conscious of the historical importance of their acts, the origin is already far behind." "Folkways," pp. 7, 8.

It is fairly clear that most of the fundamental institutions are direct outgrowths of man's elemental nature.<sup>1</sup> Bernard thinks that the institutions in their most rudimentary forms, had their inception as unreflective attempts to satisfy instinctive demands or needs.<sup>2</sup> Ellwood holds that while many other factors than purely animal impulses must enter into the formation of institutions, since no real institutions are found below the human level, yet human social life and organization is genetically related to animal social life. Innate tendencies play a very important part, as is evidenced by the family, for example. Hence "human institutions are a series of devices to control man's animal impulses to social advantage."<sup>3</sup> Dealey bases all social institutions on love and hunger. He says:

From these two primitive and fundamental human impulses or desires, have probably differentiated all other human feelings and wants, and these in their turn have come under the guidance of the intellect, with the resultant development of appropriate social institutions.<sup>4</sup>

Hence, in his opinion there is an interrelationship and a causal connection among social institutions, since all are derived from the two fundamental "appetites" and their corresponding institutions. These primitive impulses give rise to *desires*, permanent in character, demanding satisfaction, like the desires for food, safety or race continuance, and these desires give rise to united activity, and when this occurs among human groups "there will regularly develop social institutions as a means and an aid to the satisfaction of their desires."<sup>5</sup> Later variations and differentiations appear. The hunger desire and its accompanying hunting

<sup>1</sup> "In institutions human nature faces its own objectification in variously specialized and more or less inadequate forms." BALZ, A. G. A., "The Basis of Social Theory," p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> BERNARD, L. L., "Instinct," p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> ELLWOOD, C. A., "Psychology of Human Society," pp. 288, 295-296.

<sup>4</sup> DEALEY, J. R., "Sociology, Its Development and Application," pp. 203-204. See also his "Sociology," p. 91. Note also the statement from MORGAN, L. H., "Ancient Society," p. 98. "Every institution of mankind which attains permanence will be found linked with a perpetual want."

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 206, 217-218.

activity becomes a whole set of commercial institutions, including commerce enterprises, systems of markets and banks, etc. The sex desire results eventually in the family, with set rules in respect to courtship, marriage and divorce. Out of these two desires develop "*derived feelings*" which develop into other social institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Several thinkers conceive of institutions as an outgrowth of those more derivative social forces, the interests of mankind.<sup>2</sup> Beach, for example, maintains that the permanent interests develop relationships between members of society, which lead to accepted ways of acting, and eventually as institutions become a fixed part of the social life. He mentions certain prominent interests and the institutions that have grown out of them, as the religious interest and its organization and expression in the institutions of religion, especially the church; the political interest and government and law; the economic interest and its various institutions, such as property, the wage system, the corporation, and contract; the sex and parental interests organized and controlled through the family, marriage, and kinship. He concludes, "Institutions thus stand for large and universal interests."<sup>3</sup>

Sumner and Keller also base their great work, "The Science of Society" (which is really a most exhaustive analysis of the major groups of social institutions), on interests. For them institutions begin with mores, but mores "form accretions around nuclei; and the nuclei are interests." Certain of these interests are weak and transitory; others strong and constant. Every major interest of man gathers about itself a conglomerate of practices to secure its satisfaction, and when the interests are salient they develop into institutions. The chief

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> On interests as forces see SMALL, A. W., "General Sociology," pp. 425-436; ROSS, E. A., "Principles of Sociology," pp. 51-58.

<sup>3</sup> BEACH, W. G., "An Introduction to Sociology and Social Problems," p. 179.

interests are the hunger- or preservation-interest; the love-interest; the gratification-interest; and the fear-interest; the interests involving the self-maintenance, self-perpetuation, and self-gratification of society, and its relations with the supernatural. About these basic, permanent, and engrossing interests have developed massive institutions or blocks of institutions, namely, (1) the institutions of societal self-maintenance, including the industrial organization, property, war for plunder, and the regulative organizations; (2) those of societal self-perpetuation, including marriage and the family; (3) those of societal self-gratification, including more or less unrelated societal forms, such as practices of ostentation in dress, ornament, social etiquette, war for glory, and other particulars, and forms of pleasure seeking, such as games, gambling, the use of stimulants and narcotics, dancing, play acting, and the fine arts; and (4) those of religion in the broadest sense. Of course, as they point out, these institutions interpenetrate, as do the interests that summoned them into being.<sup>1</sup>

These various conceptions seem to be groping toward a set of facts which may be stated thus: There are among all peoples a considerable array of wants and needs, some of them most imperative in their nature. The great mass of social institutions are permanent social agencies originating in the necessity of satisfying in a more or less cooperative way these wants and needs of human nature as they work themselves out in social life.<sup>2</sup> The individual wants that grow out of organic needs and instinctive drives and are bound up with individual survival, such as the want of food, shelter, sex gratification, security and health, must be satisfied in a socially acceptable manner. Furthermore,

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER, W. G., and A. G. KELLER, "The Science of Society," Vol. I, pp. 88-90. Bernard also states, "The major interests of mankind tend to organize for their satisfaction vast systems of technique, of beliefs and procedure, which remain relatively constant, at least in form, over long periods of time. These relatively stable integrations of adjustment technique are institutions." "Introduction to Social Psychology," pp. 488-489.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. COOLEY, C. H., "Social Organization," p. 314.

certain social needs are practically permanent and have undoubtedly existed since the first human groupings. These needs have always called into existence appropriate means of dealing with them. For example, it has always been necessary to suppress the killing of fellow group members except in certain special circumstances; it has been necessary for the members of a given group to satisfy their wants for food and other basic necessities without running afoul of each other, and in a group of any size at all it has been necessary to satisfy such wants cooperatively, that is, by means of some division of labor; it has been necessary for all groups to regulate, to an extent, at least, the relations and intercourse of the sexes, and the relations of the generations, if it was to survive; it has always been necessary to pass on from generation to generation the social heritage of the group, especially the knowledge that had to do with individual and group survival; it has always been necessary for groups to maintain internal order and protect themselves against external aggression; it has always been necessary to have some sort of an explanation of the visible universe and some means of being at peace with the supernatural; and so on.<sup>1</sup>

As a group advances in civilization, other needs arise, perhaps not bound up so definitely with the basic necessity of bare individual or group survival, but needs producing unbearable social complications that must be definitely met by suitable and effective social devices. Thus Bernard, referring to the cause of institutions states, "They are in large degree the product of the stable and fixed needs of individuals and of groups."<sup>2</sup> Lester F. Ward says in similar strain, "There never was a human institution that was not called forth in response to a social demand, which from the scientific standpoint means a social necessity."<sup>3</sup> They are expressions of the "will-to-live." In

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dixon, R. B., "The Building of Cultures," pp. 41-42.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 565; Cf. Todd, A. J., "Theories of Social Progress," p. 326.

<sup>3</sup> "Pure Sociology," p. 268.



brief, the causal forces behind social institutions are, in the main, the compelling demands of individual and social life in the form of needs.

Certain qualifications must be made, however. In almost all societies the needs that cause social products that are entitled to the designation of "institution" are not always equally pressing and critical. They vary in intensity, grading down from those that are elemental, universal, and imperative in individual and group survival and well being to others of little weight that result from a desire to gratify some passing whim, or grow out of the aberrations and eccentricities of a particular age. These, of course, are short lived, but may have great social significance for a time. Many of the institutions of chivalry, notably, etiquette and manners, might be mentioned by way of illustration. Furthermore, some fairly well-established institutions are not the result of the general needs of the whole society, but rather are imposed on the masses by the group or groups in control, and are maintained and exalted by various cleverly spread superstitious and fictions until they are quite generally accepted, at least tacitly. As illustrations of this might be mentioned certain political stratifications, the four-caste system of India, the pyramided ranks and dignities of Rome in the Republican period, slavery in some of its phases.

Finally, some institutions exist simply because they are accepted or tolerated by part of the group, and do not concern or seriously interfere with the rest of the group. In many cases these are merely survivalistic forms. An example is the polygamy in Japan of the eleventh century, A. D., which was confined to the upper classes who alone were able to support the expense of so costly an institution.<sup>1</sup>

There are, therefore, all degrees of needs behind institutions, from those most closely bound up with general individual and group survival to those that largely rest on class needs, imagined desires, or fictions of one kind or

<sup>1</sup> See LADY MURASKI, "A Wreath of Cloud," p. 31.

another. These wants and needs also range from those relatively simple ones that grow directly out of organic wants or out of the rudimentary requirements of simple groups to those resulting from the most numerous and complex permutations of modern heterogeneous societies. Our concern here is chiefly with those more permanent and universal institutions that satisfy basic individual and group needs in all societies.

## 2. THE FUNCTIONS OF INSTITUTIONS

*a. Institutions Satisfy Basic Individual and Social Needs in a Cooperative Way.*—As can be readily gathered from the previous section, one of the chief functions of institutions is to fulfill the necessary social purposes bound up with the needs. They are agencies for insuring the means of satisfying the various basic needs, for providing socially permissible or socially desirable relationships, and of organizing and guiding various other supposedly necessary social activities. Of course, as Cole points out,<sup>1</sup> the institution may be highly complex, and have a variety of related purposes, but since the purposes and objects must be specific and to a degree obvious and intelligible in order to have the power to call the institution into being, so the function of any institution or any set of institutions must be quite clear and specific in the last analysis. Thus, the need of providing for the acquisition or production and distribution of food and other necessary things and services, and of carrying on construction, is functionally met by the great complex of economic institutions. The need of insuring protection against violence and other menacing and destructive elements is met by military institutions. The need of regulating and canalizing sex and parental drives, of giving them ordered satisfaction, and of establishing satisfactory and properly safeguarded family units is fulfilled by the various matrimonial and domestic institutions. The need of insuring proper group functioning; of

<sup>1</sup> "Social Theory," p. 49.

providing security of life, person, and things; of establishing and protecting rights; and of regularizing and standardizing the various relationships between individuals and groups within the society in the interests of social order and well-being, has resulted in the various political and legal institutions, the ethical institutions, etiquette, manners, etc. The need of providing satisfactory explanations of the unknown and of establishing proper adjustment with the inexplicable world and with the Deity or Deities has given rise to religious institutions; the need of satisfying the expressional impulses and of cooperatively satisfying the craving for form and harmony and beauty, to the various æsthetic institutions; the need of providing pleasurable and gregarious satisfactions, to recreational and play institutions; the need of communication and of providing opportunities for extending mental contacts and enriching personality, to language and writing and their derived institutions, especially the cultural institutions; the need of providing and diffusing necessary systematized knowledge and the requisite training for life and self-fulfillment, to educational institutions; the need of discovering that truth upon which all other necessary human and social activity depends, to scientific institutions.

Some of the institutional forms common in contemporary society seem not to be bound up with basic needs, or, if they are, the connection seems to be very remote. But if an established and generally observed institutional pattern has survived beyond a generation, there is good reason to believe that it is bound up with a basic need of the particular group. Certain needs and the means of satisfying them may be local. It is also possible that many relatively short-lived institutions have satisfied more or less temporary but nevertheless vital needs of a group. In the main, though, most institutions are more or less permanent and universal means of satisfying the common and basic needs of human beings in their respective natural and social environments. They insure continuous

and satisfactory human existence. "They are adjustments to the inevitable conditions of life."<sup>1</sup> As such they serve a vital and indispensable function in their respective groups.

Finally, it must be emphasized that institutions provide that these wants and needs be satisfied in a cooperative way. In fact, they cannot be met singly or by independent action, but always only by cooperation of two or more individuals. As such institutions have actually, in order to fulfill their other functions, become devices for promoting human cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

*b. Institutions Function as the Operative Bases of the Social Order.*—The discussion of this function of institutions is really a continuation of the examination of the relation of institutions to social organization. Certain jobs of ordering and regulating and standardizing the conduct and relationships and activities of the individuals and the groups of various kinds that are involved need to be done. Social institutions are the relatively abstract but determinate social forms through which these vital ends are attained. While they are not always themselves relationships, they always involve relationships, especially in their more organized form; they provide the normalized and standardized motivating and controlling concepts, rules, and purposive procedures—"the recognized and established usages," as Hobhouse calls them<sup>3</sup>—that govern these various relationships.<sup>4</sup> They are, as Bernard puts it, relatively stable integrations of adjustment technique;

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 2059.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. JUDD, "The Psychology of Social Institutions," p. 75. Interesting in this connection is the statement of SMALL and VINCENT, "An Introduction to the Study of Society," p. 61: "The whole institutional activity of man, viewed as attempted solutions of the problem of social adjustment, is an exhibition of the necessity and the capacity of man for cooperation."

<sup>3</sup> "Social Development," p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> "They [institutions] represent the crystallization of methods of guiding and controlling social relationships." GILLIN *et al.*, "Social Problems," p. 14. Institutions are "precipitated modes of social procedure or definitely organized structures for regulating the intercourse between members of a social group." TODD, A. J., "Theories of Social Progress," p. 325.

they function as systematized and organized regulatory forms that grow out of the general character of social life and the exigencies of social organization. They are, so to speak, the functional or operative aspect of social organization—the community's mechanisms for continued existence. Thus, constituting, as they do, the most essential part of social organization they "provide through this organization the essential conditions of the existence of a group as a distinct cultural entity and not a mere agglomeration of individuals."<sup>1</sup>

Viewed from a slightly different point of view, institutions give substance and structure to a social order. Hayes summarizes the matter well when he says, "Those psychic realities which we call institutions are to society what sills and timbers are to a house, or what pillars, trusses, and girders of steel are to a towering office building."<sup>2</sup> Social life depends on institutions as a sort of skeleton or framework. They are permanent forms which society creates for its actions, grooves in which it moves. "Society could no more function without them than the muscles of our bodies could function without our bones."<sup>3</sup> In a sense it is true that they are not only bone, but also muscle. They are the most conspicuous and most precious part of social structure.

The statement is undoubtedly justified that any considerable number of institutions of a given social order cannot be eradicated without destroying the social structure and scheme of functioning.<sup>4</sup> Cole arrives at essentially the same conclusion when he points out that society is a resultant of the interaction and complementary

<sup>1</sup> THOMAS, W. I., and F. ZNANIECKI, "The Polish Peasant in Europe and America," Vol. I (2 vol. edition) p. 34. See also BEACH, W. G., "Introduction to Sociology," p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> HAYES, E. C., "Introduction to the Study of Sociology," p. 409; cf. also "The Sociological Point of View," *Publications American Sociological Society*, Vol. XVI, 1921, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> GILLIN *et al.*, "Social Problems," p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> THOMAS and ZNANIECKI, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 33.

character of the various functional associations and institutions, and that a developed community larger than the family can hardly exist without institutions and associations.<sup>1</sup>

In a certain sense then the totality of the institutions and their essential parts found among a given people constitute the social organization of that people. Thus society, from this point of view, is the whole of the institutions acting together, but always in various relationships (sexual, industrial, religious, political, etc.) and through various groups and organizations. The whole life of the community is dominated and regulated by the great fundamental institutions as well as the special and unique institutions that it has developed for its own successful operation and its well being.

*c. Institutions are the Instruments of Social Control.*—High social attainment is a phenomenon of peace, in the sense that it arises only among a people among whom peaceful and ordered pursuits and habits have become the common thing. In the absence of this order, cross-purposes, antagonism of interests, injustice, inefficiency or even destructive disorder result. This occurs not solely due to the fact that individuals are antagonistic to each other, or because they are deliberately anti-social due to selfishness, but also because individuals are ignorant of their obligations to each other (especially in complex societies), or they are short sighted and do not properly comprehend the effects of their acts, or they are forgetful of others and act only with reference to themselves. This necessary state of order does not come in its highest form until the individuals have been so moulded psychically that their spontaneous action is in harmony with the social interests. But all societies, to insure themselves against the absence, breakdown or imperfect functioning of this desirable habit, supplement it with force in one form or another in producing orderly life. To bring about this state of order, therefore, every society establishes agencies

<sup>1</sup> COLE, G. D. H., "Social Theory," p. 30.

for the control of the common life, that operate both internally and externally—regulatory agencies with which no society can dispense.<sup>1</sup> These agencies are chiefly social institutions in 'one form or another. These institutions cultivate in the individuals the habits of conformity and understanding, embody the organized force of the community, and, with the group opinion that is behind them, are prepared to compel obedience and punish disobedience. They are the most stabilizing and the best organized of all the forms of social control in operation.

All institutions control and give stability to the group. Regulative concepts and categories play an exceedingly important part in them. Under the influence of each institution, we regulate our actions in relation to others along a given line according to the rules and established customs of that institution. Certain institutions are, however, more definitely intended and utilized for purposes of social control than others. Some institutions, such as the communicative, æsthetic, and some of the religious, control only in the sense that they provide an ordered means of expression, while scientific institutions are ordered means of discovery and operation. But the great mass of institutions—most of the religious, educational, and economic, and practically all of the ethical, political and domestic institutions—are definitely means of regularizing and standardizing individual and group conduct and of establishing social habits and forms of social relationship that are good, or at least socially acceptable. In fact, institutions are the most important aspect of the composite control exercised by the social environment; they represent the culmination of the group's efforts along this line. Through them the community exercises authority and even compulsion in order to provide order, peace, security and well being; through them the social imperative finds quite definite expression and modifies individual action in the direction of social ends. Groups

<sup>1</sup> Cf. SUMNER and KELLER, "The Science of Society," Vol. I, p. 459.

more or less deliberately undertake to exercise control over the actions, ideas, and feeling of individuals so as to make them conform to the life needs of the group, and the so-called regulative institutions, or institutions of social control, are the social and cultural devices for doing this. Professor Ellwood analyzes and describes them well when he says:

In high civilization they are the chief means of controlling the activities of individuals and they probably have more to do with the formation of the habits and ideas of individuals in highly civilized groups than all other influences, objective and subjective, combined. The pressure which they put upon the individual to conform his conduct to that of his group may, of course, exceed the limits of wisdom. Nevertheless, we must recognize that order and solidarity in vast, complex, human groups are impossible without specialized institutions of social control. However much they may seem to hamper the freedom of the individual, the constraint or discipline which they impose is of prime importance for the unity and survival of all civilized groups.<sup>1</sup>

As Bernard points out,<sup>2</sup> social institutions serve as controls in two ways; first, "they serve as rules of the game and provide machinery for the cooperation of the members of the group in performing collective functions," and second, "they are relatively permanent ways of acting, changing so slowly that they do not lose their identity in one or many generations," and consequently "serve as mechanisms to induct each succeeding generation into the practices of the preceeding generations."

Institutions are peculiarly effective as control agents in that they more and more substitute an external, objective, depersonalized social control of conduct more or less rational, for the impulsive or instinctive, subjective, or individual control.<sup>3</sup> Practically all the control institutions are organized on the basis of external and objective social controls. Of course, it is true that it is the individual, and not the institution which the child or other individual

<sup>1</sup> "Psychology of Human Society," pp. 173-174.

<sup>2</sup> "Introduction to Social Psychology," pp. 565-566.

<sup>3</sup> ELLWOOD, *op. cit.*, p. 319; BERNARD, "Instinct," p. 121.



imitates or that forces the conduct, but the behavior of this model or compeller of action "is standardized and uniformized by that cooperative interchange of contacts, functions, and services which we objectify and symbolize as the institution."<sup>1</sup> Never before have men been in a position where institutional control could be objectified as now, for as Bernard indicates:

We have now reached the stage of development in which science rather than custom plays the leading role in creating this objectivity of social control through institutions.<sup>2</sup>

This externalization will increase as data and technique increase in volume and become accessible.

Several facts stand out in conclusion regarding the functions of social institutions. In the first place these functions are not mutually exclusive; they may, from some points of view, be considered as merely different ways of looking at social institutions as social functions. Certainly they operate together. Secondly, all institutions, even those that today seem most absurd, have now, or have had at some time, a definite and assignable reason behind them. Third, any well systematized and effective social psychic mechanisms that satisfy basic, or what in the opinion of the groups appear at the time to be basic, needs, that enhance the ability of social groups to maintain themselves and persist, that control the individuals and groups within a society, whose demands are generally thought to be right, and that have the power of enforcing themselves, are institutions.

### 3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INSTITUTIONS IN GROUP LIFE AND CULTURE

Social institutions are among the most important objects of investigation for the social sciences, due not only to the crucial and indispensable functions which they perform in societal life, but also to their great significance as reflections

<sup>1</sup> BERNARD, *op. cit.*, p. 566.

<sup>2</sup> "Instinct," p. 121.

and concentrations of a society's culture, and as evidences of an achieved stage of civilization.

Institutions are the great culture carriers—the depositories of the social heritage, the media of its operation and perpetuation.<sup>1</sup> Without them there would be no enduring products of the intercourse and interstimulation of individuals or groups.

In fact, institutions are themselves a crystallization of the cultural evolution of a group. Into their production and maintenance have gone the efforts and planning of myriads of forebears. Being both structures and functioning agents, they are the residue, in more or less organized form, of a vast amount of social experience and experiment of past generations in the form of trial and error, social struggle, invention, and attempts at social integration and adjustment.<sup>2</sup> In them are found most of the outstanding constructive culture elements that the centuries, with their inexorable selective forces, have permitted to endure and develop. As Judd puts it, institutions are “accumulations of social capital which have been produced in the course of community life” . . . “the product of cumulative group action.”<sup>3</sup> The will of any mass of men, whether operating unconsciously under the force of circumstances or voluntarily pursuing its own intelligent purposes, has in the past found its characteristic expression in the institutional life of the group. All great group achievement has in fact either been institutional achievement, or it has left its enduring impression on some at least of the institutions.<sup>4</sup> The great recognized values in the social

<sup>1</sup> “Institutions are the organs that conserve what is best in the past of the human race.” GIDDINGS, F. H., “Principles of Sociology,” p. 396. “By means of institutions it has become possible for one group of minds to touch and direct the experience of minds remote in time and place.” JUDD, C. H., *op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. MECKLIN, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 375.

<sup>4</sup> Thus Cooley says of institutions, “They preserve the results of past experiment and accumulate them about the principal lines of public endeavor, so that intelligence working along these lines may use them” “Social

life of the group, especially the higher spiritual, moral and æsthetic values, the most precious parts of the heritage of the race, are also embodied in their institutions,<sup>1</sup> and through them are safeguarded and transmitted to oncoming generations. At any given time institutions "reveal more or less clearly the common habits and beliefs of a group, and hence are the elements chiefly to be studied in examining society's life."<sup>2</sup> They have in them the web of ideas, sentiments, conventions, and customs that constitute the common life; these they hold together and perpetuate. Almost every cultural activity is performed through institutions. They thus represent the more steady and fixed fundamentals of society.

Man's community life in practically all its phases—material, social, political, recreational, spiritual—is summed up and objectified in the institutions. In fact, the general characteristics of any particular civilization, past or present, are most discernible in its institutions. From them we get an index of the life, as a whole.<sup>3</sup> They mark and secure a level of social attainment.<sup>4</sup> What is not in institutions is essentially individualistic, and not comprised in the common life.

Hence, a group's culture is largely the summation of its institutions, and its institutions are largely an embodiment

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Process," p. 355. Note also the extravagant statement of Ward: "The term institution is capable of such expansion as to embrace all human achievement, and in this enlarged sense institutions become the chief study of the sociologist. All achievements are institutions, and there is a decided gain to the mind in seeking to determine the true subject-matter of sociology, to regard human institutions and human achievement as synonymous terms, and as constituting, in the broadest sense of both, the field of research of a great science." "Pure Sociology," p. 31.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ELLWOOD, C. A., "Sociology and Modern Social Problems," p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> "In institutions, which are types, centers around which society congregates and from which its influences radiate, the ages themselves may be studied . . . Society, in a measure, is concentrated in them, and an interpretation of them is an interpretation of society." STUCKENBERG, J. H. W., "Introduction to the Study of Sociology," p. 177.

<sup>4</sup> HETHERINGTON and MUIRHEAD, "Social Purpose," p. 129.

of its culture. Their study constitutes real history as distinguished from mere *histoire-bataille*. In the light of a study of institutions, history is largely a record of social processes that leave their permanent effects in the form of new institutions or modifications of old ones. Civilization itself consists largely of the unfolding of old institutions and the appearance of new ones.

Institutions are not only the basis of the culture of groups at any given time, but are also the starting point and machinery for the next stage of civilization. Judd puts it well when he says:

Civilization is a moving, living fact; its elements, which are the institutions that have been evolved up to this time by man's genius, are at once the products of the evolution and the controls which are to direct its further course.<sup>1</sup>

Since social life and social institutions are inseparably related and vitally interdependent, a satisfactory social life is possible only where social institutions of quality exist. ✓ And this leads to the final conclusion, namely, that civilization is possible only where the social institutions are stable and well developed; its quality depends on the degree of refinement reached by the institutions, and its advancement depends upon increasingly efficient and ennobled institutions as instrumentalities. ✓

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<sup>1</sup> JUDD, C. H., "The Psychology of Institutions," p. 217.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE COMPOSITION OF INSTITUTIONS

#### 1. THE DIFFICULTY OF DISTINGUISHING THE SPECIFIC PARTS OF INSTITUTIONS

Any observer of institutions in operation is struck by the fact that they present different aspects at different times; they seem to be this now and that at some other time. Careful analysis, however, shows that this apparent indefiniteness is rather due to the fact that institutions are highly composite culture complexes,<sup>1</sup> made up of a great variety of component and interacting elements, not all of which are equally in evidence at any given time. These component elements, it is noted, vary in number and nature, and possess varying degrees of definiteness and tangibility. To understand institutions properly it is necessary to point out all of these component parts, and to examine each as to its nature and its indispensability in the operation of the institution.

#### 2. THE INSTITUTION AS CONCEPT AND STRUCTURE

An institution consists of a concept (idea, notion, doctrine, interest) and a structure. The structure is a framework, or apparatus, or perhaps only a number of functionaries, set to cooperate in prescribed ways at a certain conjuncture. The structure holds the concept and furnishes instrumentalities for bringing it into the world of facts and action in a way to serve the interests of men in society.<sup>2</sup>

Here Sumner presents what has come to be the classic statement of the basic elements of an institution. Any

<sup>1</sup> "We may define a culture complex as consisting of a group of closely related behavior patterns which have become built into the habits, the attitudes, the skills, the equipment, the vocabulary, and the social organizations of a people." HART, H., "The Science of Social Relations," p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> SUMNER, W. G., "Folkways," pp. 53-54.

detailed examination of institutions forces one to the same conclusion.

Institutions are first and foremost psychic phenomena. As Bernard says,<sup>1</sup> "The institution has primarily a conceptual and abstract, rather than a perceptual and concrete, existence." Their essence is ideas and other concepts, interests, attitudes, traditions, and other psychic uniformities that dominate our social behavior. In a very real sense, institutions are only in our heads; they are "common and reciprocating attitudes; they are our notions of regulation; they are deep-seated mental habits that dominate our reactions in our social and natural environments."

But institutions are unavoidably also societal structures; they have an objective existence in order to operate effectively and integrate the behavior of men. As Park and Burgess put it:<sup>2</sup> "The structure embodies the idea of the institution and furnishes the instrumentalities through which the idea is put into action." Judd states that the institution "takes material form in certain aids and instruments which have been evolved in the process of its establishment and in the process of its transmission."<sup>3</sup> Hence the institutions may have special groups, an administrative organization and other material and mechanical apparatus, such as recorded codes, archives, and physical extensions for carrying the controls into effect.<sup>4</sup> This structural organization may vary in degree from a loose, haphazard and informal affair, barely distinguishable to the observer, to an hierarchical organization with a trained and specialized personnel and a vast array of organizational machinery. But something in the way of structure seems to be necessary, in the sense that paper and binding are essential in a book.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Introduction to Social Psychology," p. 566 (see also p. 464).

<sup>2</sup> "Introduction to the Science of Sociology," p. 796.

<sup>3</sup> JUDD, C. H., "The Psychology of Social Institutions," p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. GOLDENWEISER, A. A., "Early Civilization," p. 16, EDIE, L. D., "Principles of the New Economics," p. 193.

<sup>5</sup> Consult especially, CHAPIN, F. S., "Cultural Change," pp. 44-50, 431-433.

### 3. THE MORE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS CONSTITUTING INSTITUTIONS

As one analyzes in detail all types of institutions, and views them from various angles, the component elements discussed below reveal themselves. These elements are difficult to get at because institutions are so much a part of ourselves that it is hard to observe them objectively. These elements can only with difficulty be classified. They are not mutually exclusive, but frequently overlap. Not all of them are found in all institutions. Practically all will be found in some at a given time; in others there will be only a certain combination of some of them. This is due to the fact that the functions of particular institutions differ. Nor must it be assumed that the perfection or efficacy of the particular institution is dependent upon the number of elements it contains. Every institution tends to have an assemblage of elements and qualities that is most appropriate for the functions it is called upon to perform. Nor does it mean that each institution is self-contained; some depend on other institutions for administrative aid. Not all the elements found in a given institution are at all times operative; hence are not always in evidence. In any institution its elements operate together as a variable and inconstant unity.

*a. The Underlying Concept or Idea.*—As already noted, the real essence of the institution is the system of ideas and principles behind it.<sup>1</sup> Behind the social patterns one senses the mental pattern. The need or needs which start the processes that eventually terminate in an institution is accompanied by a more or less conscious recognition by the group or society of the need, and some notion regarding the fulfillment of function and purpose. There is a concept or set of concepts, articulate or inarticulate, at least an implied system of ideas and principles, an underlying assumption of order along some line, at the heart of every institution.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. URWICK, E. J., "A Philosophy of Social Progress," p. 31.



As Cole has it:

An institution is always at bottom an idea, or belief, or a commandment, and never an actual thing. It attaches itself to things, but it is not identical with things.<sup>1</sup>

Again he says:

An institution is . . . an idea which is manifested concretely in some aspect of social conduct, and which forms a part of the underlying assumption of communal life.<sup>2</sup>

It is a conceptual unity in the folk mind that has been established by common experience and will.

Basic in the ideas underlying practically every institution is the notion of some form of order in the social life which is felt or recognized to be desirable or necessary. The function plays around this conception of order in the particular department of life. Thus the essence of the institution of law is a concept of ordered relationships of human beings and things by means of rules and punishments; at the heart of the family is the concept of ordered relations of the sexes and the generations; in property is a philosophy of order regarding ownership or control of things and creatures; in all educational institutions is the idea that in the properly ordered relations of the generations, experience needs to be systematically imparted; in economic institutions is the concept of orderly satisfaction of wants by processes of production, distribution, and consumption; in æsthetic institutions, there are the various concepts of ordered relationship of sound, color, substance or movement in giving fulfillment to the human spirit; in religious institutions is the idea of ordered relationships with deity or deities; in scientific institutions is a conception of orderly procedure in discovery and presentation of truth, etc. Even behind every insignificant, specialized, contemporary institution there is an implied or expressed idea of social purpose. This is one of the indispensable elements of institutions.

<sup>1</sup> "Social Theory," p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

*b. Attitudes.*—Another element composing the institutional complex is made up of mental attitudes centering around the concept—an element quite intangible and yet patently effective in institutionalized conduct. These attitudes, while more or less indefinable, are the mental patterns in the form of both affective beliefs and motor sets regarding social conduct and relations in the satisfaction of needs that have been developed in the individual under the tutelage of his social heritage. They are institutional “fixtures” in our heads, and include most of our stereotypes regarding social relations and activities. They dominate the thinking and action of the individual in all of the more fixed institutional situations from the early years on. They affect the judgments, interact with the customs, lie behind and stimulate the institutionalized habits, and motivate acceptable or even required conduct. Because of them the institutional ways are the “only” ways and the “right” ways. Viewing the institution from the angle of the individual participants, one may say that the institution exists only in the concepts and attitudes of the individuals who accept it. Thus, the particular state existing among a given people is really a set of deep political attitudes. In fact, any of the more basic institutions have the older, subtler, stabler and more generalized attitudes looming large in them. Any assault on the more prominent established institutions, as, for example, the recent criticism of marriage, shows how significant these attitudes are. One reason why we adhere so tenaciously to institutions is because of these institutional attitudes.<sup>1</sup>

*c. A Complex of Folkways and Mores, Customs and Traditions.*—Another very important part of most institutions is a loosely assembled mass of folkways and mores, customs and traditions that are changing slowly, do not

<sup>1</sup>Allport states that an institution is “reducible to common and reciprocating attitudes of individuals and nations in such attitudes as to both content and degree of generality.” “The Psychological Nature of Political Structure,” *Political Science Review*, Vol. 21, p. 615, August, 1927.

possess any definite internal unity, but do have a certain vague conceptual unity. It is by means of these that the concept or idea underlying the institution first objectifies itself. While the institution usually develops a rational and practical content which carries it beyond custom in many of its activities, the custom element is always present, and serves to tie the institution to its past, gives it rootage, so to speak, and an emotional hold upon the members of the group. It seems to be true that a new institution does not have a firm hold upon its public until it does develop a background and foundation of folkways and mores, tradition and custom. Any ritual that an institution may have is invariably bound up with its custom content.

Institutions, of course, vary greatly in the amount of custom in them, the part which the institution has to play in the social scene at any given moment being a determining factor. Thus, some of the oldest institutions which, due to their age, would be supposed to be hoary with custom, do however actually have a relatively small amount because being highly essential collective adjustment mechanisms they must be kept efficient and up to date, *e.g.*, economic and political institutions. On the other hand, æsthetic, ethical, and legal institutions, though relatively young, carry much custom, probably due to the somewhat greater degree of social isolation that they have.<sup>1</sup>

Certain institutions, because of their nature and the peculiar service they render, can and do depend largely on their custom content to give them currency, acceptance, and efficacy, and do not need a large administrative machinery. As illustrations, might be mentioned such institutions as language, peerage, monarchy, ancestor worship, etiquette, monogamy, caste in India, and practically all æsthetic institutions. And yet, being generally established and recognized, manifested in conduct, and serving essential purposes in the opinion of their groups, they are thoroughgoing institutions.

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent discussion of these points see BERNARD, *op. cit.*, p. 570.

d. *A Code*.—Almost every institution, in providing the proper understanding and definite statement of the order necessary in carrying on its peculiar function, resorts to some sort of rules and laws, demands and standards; in brief, a code, more or less definitely understood, that must be followed by all persons connected with it.<sup>1</sup> These institutional codes embody the modes of action which seem to the members of the institution, past and present, to serve the ends which called this particular set of necessary habits into existence.<sup>2</sup> Unlike the laws of the state, they do not all need to be (nor are they) definite and precise, or in writing, nor do their infractions need to be definitely punishable, but the group disapproval is usually visited upon those who violate them. They are more or less specific expressions of that which is sanctioned or disapproved in institutional relationships.

Thus, states have their constitutions, the enactments of their legislative bodies, their treaties with foreign countries, their court decisions, their administrative rules and regulations, as well as a vast array of unwritten rules and implications governing the informal relationships of members of the state. Underlying the family are not only the various legal statutes governing its formation, constitution, and perpetuation, but also a set of unwritten demands governing relations of husband and wife, and parents and children, such as the requirement that a wife stand by her husband, or that a husband upon his honor defend his wife against slander or insult, and that children respect their parents. In ethical institutions, the codal elements are the most noticeable feature. All scientific, religious, and educational institutions have both their written and their implied requirements that are inherently related to the underlying

<sup>1</sup> Cf. HETHERINGTON and MUIRHEAD, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-129; BERNARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 576-579.

<sup>2</sup> "The code contains the most important content of the theory of the institution, or that part of it which is regarded as most important and which the members of the institution desire to make definite and keep intact." BERNARD, *op. cit.*, p. 576.

concept of the institutional function. Æsthetic institutions rest upon basic canons of beauty, art, and *technique* which are current in its relationships and obvious in the habit expressions of its members. Cultural forms and institutions are also at any given time a matter of rather precise principles and requirements.

Of course, the highly competitive and highly functional adjustment institutions are more likely to develop effective and binding codes than are the less competitive and less vital institutions. But all institutions that emphasize their codes are not necessarily highly important or efficient. Declining institutions sometimes make much of elaborate and showy codes, but insist only upon verbal conformity to the principles of the code.<sup>1</sup>

*e. A Form of Social Relationship.*—As we take up the more tangible and concrete elements of an institution, we note that it is a fabric of fairly definite and generally sanctioned relations, by no means always direct, between individuals of a group in respect to one another, as, for example, in the state, rank, family, ceremonial relations; or to some external object, as in property; or to both, as in art, science, and industry.<sup>2</sup> In fact, in many cases the relationships have necessitated the institution, for the institution is a functioning agency that serves the people related to each other by the need that is its cause. Every institution, whether it be language, marriage, law, property, art, manners, or the church, directly or indirectly implies or involves human relationship and is an attempt to standardize this unavoidable relationship and to insure success in the accomplishment of purposes growing out of the need. Pertinent are the relationships of individuals, satisfying needs for necessary and life-sustaining things and services, needs for comforts, conventions, etc.; the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. BERNARD, *op. cit.*, p. 579.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. GINSBERG, M., "The Psychology of Society," p. 122; MACIVER, R. M., "Community," p. 155; URWICK, E. J., "A Philosophy of Social Progress, p. 31.

relationship of individuals in maintaining order among themselves; the relationships of the sexes and generations; the relationships growing out of æsthetic needs, knowledge needs, religious needs, communicative needs, etc. Of necessity, most of these relationships are cooperative.

*f. Standardized Habits.*—The ordered relationships take the form of stable, common, and reciprocal ways of behaving. This recognition of habits as a basic element in the institution is the contribution to the theory of institutions of the psychologists and social psychologists. They have pointed out that as the institution expresses itself in the life of the society it consists of more or less standardized social habits and social behavior—"conventional methods of behavior on the part of various groups or of persons in various situations."<sup>1</sup> The institutional stimuli produce more or less uniform responses or reactions, or systems of responses or reactions in the individuals of each generation as they come upon the scene. Thus, the individual, with the help of his fellows, adapts himself to his world in a more or less conventional way through conformity responses. These habits are gradually acquired by the learning process—largely complex modifications of original responses—and are difficult to change except through relearning. But the point is that the institution concretely consists at any given moment of "regular and mutually expected ways of behaving" of individuals, these being the result of "appropriate stimuli." Ellwood actually states that: "Institutions are simply more highly developed and systematized, more definitely sanctioned and established social habits."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> HAMILTON, W. H., "An Institutional Approach to Economic Theory," *American Economic Association Proc.*, 1918, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> *Socialism and Modern Social Problems*, Vol. 66. For the literature on this point see ALLPORT, F. H., "The Nature of Institutions," *Social Forces*, Vol. 6, pp. 167-179, December, 1927; ALLPORT, F. H., "The Psychological Nature of Political Structures," *Am. Pol. Sci. Rev.*, Vol. 21, pp. 611-618; August, 1927; KANTOR, J. R. "An Essay Toward an Institutional Con-

In viewing the facts as a whole, the mistake must not be made, however, of conceiving of the habit aspect as the only phase of significance of institutions. For, while the institutions are habits in individual reaction, the fact that they have a long history as systematized forms of thought and living, have a permanent character, reflect types of group needs, are often more or less organized and in charge of administrative agents, are made to serve as means of social control, and, hence, are imposed upon the individuals and insistently enforced by the group is justification for their treatment as separate, though often intangible, social entities or products. As viewed in the individual, the institution is merely a habit reaction, but the activity of the institution in a group is a matter of process—it is an organized phase of the community's life, involving agencies of uniformity, operation, and a structure.<sup>1</sup>

*g. Associations.*—Most institutions, in fulfilling their necessary functions, operate through a certain number of definite associations or organizations. Now an association is a body or group of human beings, united and organized for some more or less clearly perceived common and specific purpose or end, or aggregation of purposes and ends, and having appropriate methods and agents of functioning, especially more or less well-devised administrative machinery.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that the institution, as a functional social element, will have the nominal or actual character of an association; may, in fact, consist of a particular organization of persons who are the institu-

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ception of Social Psychology," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 27, pp. 768-779, May, 1922; KANTOR, J. R., "The Institutional Foundation of a Scientific Social Psychology," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 29, pp. 674-687, May, 1924; BERNARD, L. L., *op. cit.*, pp. 518-519.

<sup>1</sup> In this connection see CHAPIN, F. S., "Cultural Change," pp. 44-49; HOUSE, F. N., "The Range of Social Theory," p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> For excellent definitions of associations see HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Social Development," pp. 49-50; MACIVER, R. M., *op. cit.*, p. 155; COLE, G. D. H., "Social Theory," p. 42; GINSBERG, M., "The Psychology of Society," pp. 121-122.

tion's members, and who through it are seeking to satisfy their common institutional needs. The association is thus for the institution the objective and perceptible machine, the chief structural element, through which the underlying idea is carried into action; function is resident in it and has its embodiment in it to a great extent; it is the concrete organization, the tangible agency, through which the institution is functioning at the moment. Thus, the state and its political parties, its bureaus and departments, its legislative bodies, the courts, the police systems, etc. are associations through which government expresses itself; the army and navy are associations through which national defense and aggression express themselves; the denominations, the organizations of laymen and clergymen, are associations through which religion functions in American life; the schools, colleges, universities, with their teaching staffs, administrative bodies, school boards, boards of regents, etc., are associations through which the educational function is carried on; corporations, boards of trade, boards of direction, banks, clearing houses, factories, sales staffs, etc. are associations carrying on industry and commerce; the family is an association expressive of ordered, sexual, and parent and child relations; an art institute is an association embodying certain phases of æsthetic institutions.<sup>1</sup> But these are all merely tangible and mechanical projections of social function, and must never be mistaken for the institution itself.<sup>2</sup>

It is sometimes true that since most institutions have to operate through associations they sometimes create associations to serve as organizations to carry out the satisfaction of the needs they serve; it is also true, however, that associations occasionally create regulatory forms that may in time become institutions.

<sup>1</sup> It must not be thought however that all institutions are embodied in associations, nor do all associations embody institutions. Property, *e.g.*, may be mentioned as a thoroughgoing institution that is not at the same time an association.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. WARD, L. F., "Outlines of Sociology," p. 170.



*h. Physical Extensions.*—Some institutions, in order to function properly, need also certain physical equipment such as the homestead and private furniture, offices and buildings, apparatus for communication and transportation, machinery and various other equipment, laboratories, printing equipment, church edifices and altars, factories, stores, court houses, capitol buildings, police stations and jails, penitentiaries, art galleries, etc., etc.<sup>1</sup> These constitute the physical body of the institution.

These last two elements of institutions are those that most people have in mind when thinking of institutions, and they often mistake them for the whole content, probably due to the fact that they are most readily perceived. In fact, as Bernard shows, we tend commonly to characterize institutions in terms of these objective and material forms of organization.<sup>2</sup> And yet these are not indispensable in all institutions, and certainly are not the most important part, for some of the most strategic and far-reaching institutions either dispense with them altogether, or only occasionally operate through the administrative machinery and equipment of other institutions, or have a very meager equipment of their own. As cases in point might be mentioned, language, writing, the forms of marriage, property, and the æsthetic and ethical institutions.

In the main though, as Bernard also points out:<sup>3</sup>

The social institution will be effective in proportion as it develops both a good administrative organization and an efficient physico-social apparatus for carrying its controls into effect. The more functional an institution is in the social life or collective adjustment process, the more necessary is an effective equipment with which to work.

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<sup>1</sup> For a still more detailed analysis of the structure of institutions see CHAPIN, F. S., "A New Definition of Institutions," *Social Forces*, Vol. 6, p. 375, March, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 564.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 578.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE PIVOTAL INSTITUTIONAL FIELDS

No attempt is made in this chapter to offer an exhaustive list of institutions, for there are literally dozens, and perhaps hundreds, of them, some large and some small, some important and some relatively insignificant, some voluntary and some compulsory, some local, some national, and some cosmopolitan. To enumerate them is both impossible and unnecessary. Nor is it our purpose to offer a classification of institutions, for no classification is entirely satisfactory, since each and every principle of division would do violence to some institution. Institutions do not represent water-tight compartments in social life, nor are they absolutely clear cut and precise in their characteristics and functions.

The purpose here is merely to call attention to the major or pivotal institutional fields in which the multiplicity of institutions operate, each of which includes its numerous special institutions. These fields, in turn, conform roughly to the fields, or perhaps the classes, of permanent adjustment and regulatory needs of human beings in groups. For, after all, the institutions themselves are merely the numerous special forms of social apparatus in each field by means of which the major groups of needs are met. The combined institutions in a particular field constitute what we call an "order," that is, a segment of the functional activities essential in any society. Thus the economic order has to do with economic needs, activities, and mechanisms; and the political order, the moral order, the religious order, and so on, have parallel content in special social fields.

The reader must be cautioned that when the territory of social regulation is divided into fields it is a more or less arbitrary division for purposes of examination and analysis.

Actually, there is much overlapping of institutions in different fields. For example, marriage falls predominantly in the field of sexual and domestic regulation, but it is decidedly an economic institution also among most peoples. The family is both a domestic and an educational institution. Certain institutions that order face-to-face contacts fall in both the fields of law and ethics. Other institutions straddle the economic and the political fields. We will attempt to place the institution in the field in which it serves its major regulatory function. We will also confine ourselves to the more substantial and permanent institutions, for their significance is far greater than the highly specialized institution; since these latter often come into existence to satisfy temporary needs. As Cooley states: "The life of special institutions is often transient in proportion to its specialty."<sup>1</sup> A brief review of the outstanding institutional fields follows:

#### 1. THE ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL FIELD

Economic and industrial institutions in some form are basic for the satisfaction of all other needs, for, whether in isolated groups or in complex societies, in primitive or in civilized groups, men must possess the means of physical maintenance in order to exist and perform the functions of life. Food, clothing, shelter, transportation, light, and heat are elemental necessities without which life is not only mean and miserable, but impossible. As civilization advances, the physical minima increase in number and kind. Around no other force do the human energies and social agencies, whatever their character, revolve so much as around the economic. These processes of obtaining livelihood are complicated by the fact that they consist of satisfying unlimited wants out of a limited stock of goods in existence at any given time, and of conserving these goods and making them go as far as possible.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Social Organization," p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> POUND, ROSCOE, "Social and Economic Problems of the Law," *Annals American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 136, p. 1, March, 1928.

Everywhere the provision of the means of physical maintenance has had to be social, for the knowledge of how to make nature serve man's needs has grown out of cooperation and invention which is a social process. Established and regulated means of carrying on and controlling production and the various processes and agencies incidental and essential thereto, and of dividing what was produced among the members of society in some acceptable manner have been necessary. The groups have also had to decide what was most worth while producing, and what principles should govern the standards of behavior of men in consuming the goods.<sup>1</sup> Everywhere there must be an economic order or system, in which standard ideas, principles, techniques, and a host of organizational forms are essential.

Hence, these ever-present economic needs in social groups have led to various social products of an institutional nature, the most significant of which at present are the institutions of production, distribution, property, contract, inheritance, money, exchange and credit, banks, interest, transportation, stock and produce exchanges, labor unions, markets, consumption institutions, and various unique forms and combinations of these. Of course, there are a host of now abandoned economic institutions that in other eras played a vital and indispensable rôle, such as slavery, usury, serfdom, and the guild system. Many of these institutions, in a less significant way, are also legal institutions, as for example, property, contract, and inheritance; while production, property, and consumption forms are also much involved in the field of domestic institutions.

The specific functions of the most important economic institutions follow: production is the institution concerned with the various processes and stages whereby the materials of nature are put in forms suitable for human use in a systematic way; the distributive institutions determine the manner in which the proceeds of production are divided

<sup>1</sup> Cf. BEACH, W. G., "Introduction to Sociology," p. 224.

among the factors; in the last analysis, the various groups that cooperated either with means or services in their production; property is the economico-legal institution that establishes the possession and use rights regarding various types of corporeal and non-corporeal things as between persons, families, and larger groups, and the social responsibilities that accompany these rights; the market is the buying and selling institution of the economic system, and the various exchanges are subforms of this; money is the institution which provides both the standard of value and the medium of exchange for all economic transactions, and credit is the highly specialized form of deferring payment and of expediting by accounting methods these monetary transactions; interest is the system of payment for the use of loanable funds; banks are the various institutional forms of carrying on financial and credit transactions of all kinds for industry and the public at large. Contract is the economico-legal institution that standardizes and enforces agreements; inheritance is the standard form of property transmission from generation to generation; labor organizations are institutional means whereby the workers ensure themselves a degree of security and consideration in the industrial system; consumption institutions all regulate in some way the use of finished products in the satisfaction of individual or group interests.

## 2. THE FIELD OF MATRIMONIAL AND DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS

The institutions comprising this field grow out of the needs contingent upon the fact that the human race consists of two sexes, which at times are drawn together in mating by gusty and spasmodic sex passion, from which mating offspring may issue long after the passion has passed. Furthermore, since the race is bisexual, since they must live in proximity and since they are complementary to each other, they are forced to cooperate, and must have some form of relationship that is consistent with their own and the group's well being. To cope with these

situations, two major social institutions—marriage and the family—have developed among all peoples.

The function of the marriage institution is to regulate and stabilize and standardize sexual intercourse, for among all peoples sex has been found to be too tumultuous an instinct to be left uncontrolled by the group. As such, marriage is strictly a social institution, for mating in itself is a purely biological function and was practiced long before marriage. It is a social and not a biological necessity.<sup>1</sup> While society holds sexual intercourse allowable and even desirable, it everywhere, from experience, has had to make it more or less exclusive, force it to occur only according to strict rules, and to make the sex relations providing it more or less permanent. In brief, the parties to mating have to assume a degree of responsibility, and the mating that is allowable has to fit in with both sociological and biological necessities.

Marriage tends to result in the family, in that mating results in procreation and progeny; and the family is the fulfillment of marriage, or, perhaps, one is justified in saying that marriage is merely a phase of the more basic institution, the family. (The primary purpose of the family is to serve as society's institution for its own self-perpetuation; it is society's means of assuring itself that the necessary future generations will be forthcoming and properly reared; it produces, protects, and provides for the care and development of offspring and makes the parents definitely responsible. It thus regulates not only parental but also filial behavior, and provides a standardized relationship along these lines. The family, consequently, (is a miniature societal organization consisting primarily of both parents, properly married, and their children; and secondarily of the kindred on both sides, and is characteristically formed upon the blood tie.) As such, it constitutes a unit apart from the remainder

<sup>1</sup> GROVES, E. R., and W. F. OGBURN, "American Marriage and Family Relationships," pp. 6-7.

of the community. (Equally patent is the fact that the family is a means whereby every individual born is assigned a definite place in his or her society by which his or her social relations to the rest of society are determined.

Both marriage and the family have certain economic aspects also. Particularly is the family the primary economic unit, for among most peoples the economic activities of both husband and wife center around the family. This accounts for the fact that the family is easily and quickly affected by economic conditions. The family is also usually the unit in property ownership.

Furthermore, the family is the primary institution for the education of the children in moral and religious traditions, manners, social attitudes, and still, among many peoples, in methods of obtaining a livelihood. Thus it will be seen that the family has significant economic, moral, and religious functions to perform. The family, when unified by common sentiments and interests, when stabilized by mutual devotion and cooperation, and when spiritualized by ideals is referred to as the *home*.

Since human beings are the parties to marital relationships, there is the possibility of mistakes or dissatisfaction in the choice of mates; of situations arising which make forced relationship individually or socially intolerable or undesirable. Hence, among most peoples there is divorce, that is, the standard and socially acceptable way of dissolving marriage. This always includes some socially acceptable grounds for dissolution, and means of satisfying any other more likely contingencies growing out of the separation.

### 3. THE POLITICAL FIELD

The political institutions are all means of establishing and maintaining order in and among human groups. Without them, general anarchism and chaos would prevail. Hence, they are also among the most fundamental institu-



tions in the life of all groups larger than the family with its kin relations; that is, all politically organized societies. The function of political institutions is to insure ordered relationships of all kinds between group members; establish rules of group living and tranquility, and enforce them; insure life, liberty, rights, peace, justice, and the pursuit of all socially acceptable individual and minor group interests and ends; to provide for internal security of person and property; to protect against external aggression, and also, because of their scope and peculiar nature, to assist in the maintenance, and sometimes even to assist in the production, of various other valuable and necessary institutions. Chief among political institutions, of course, is the state, which usually includes all the others, although recently the loose organizations of nation-states have established institutions similar in structure and function to the institutions of single states. In addition to the state, with its legislative, judicial, and administrative functions, there are a great array of other political institutions, most of them subinstitutions of the state, such as the law, the judiciary and courts, the legislatures, the police, the military, and the various local governments.

The state is that system of institutions which, in order to secure order and certain elementary common purposes and conditions of life, unites under a single scheme of political control the inhabitants of a given territory. Its prime function is to enable human beings to get along with their kind, to secure peace and order among the individuals and classes within the society; in brief it establishes a peace group and maintains it according to principles of justice established by the group.<sup>1</sup> Its chief regulatory function is thus to reduce "antagonisms between members through a reconciliation or demarkation of their spheres of interests and rights." This is absolutely essential in any association, for "while individuals can see their own

<sup>1</sup> Cf. SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 354; HETHERINGTON and MUIRHEAD, "Social Purpose," p. 230.

interests, or what they take to be such, plainly enough, they do not readily appreciate those of others, much less the interests of society as a whole."<sup>1</sup> Especially is this true where the social relationships are highly impersonal. Hence, certain uniformities and coordinations of conduct must be maintained, and certain other acts are definitely labelled as anti-social, and are tabooed and punished. Furthermore, in all communities of any size and consequence at all, the necessary activities and relations are too complex and manifold and too far-reaching in their effects to be left to the spontaneous regulation of individuals, however intelligent and well intentioned they may be. Without these regulations, no groups could survive. The state is, therefore, the artificial institution which through its various organizations and associations exercises the authority vested in it by the group that established it, or permitted, or submitted to, its establishment, in order to produce, with force, if necessary, a common united, and reasonable living together. It is the formal and organized way in which a people imposes the necessary discipline upon itself in order that it may survive and prosper. It is the deciding social voice, the ultimate group authority. Consequently, it also enforces the regulatory measures of many other institutions, as, for example, the family, marriage, and most economic and industrial institutions. So important are its various social-control functions that the groups everywhere permit the use of force in carrying out these functions.

Another function that the state has always served has been to protect the group against the aggression of other groups, and to carry on what has been deemed by the group's rulers, necessary acts of aggression against other groups.

The state also, through the order which it creates both within the society and between societies, makes it possible for each of the other institutions to live its own life and carry on its functions without interruption and delay.

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

It is, in a sense, the necessary condition of the effective functioning of the other institutions.<sup>1</sup>

The modern state is now also the agency through which the group carries on the various general purposes which it deems essential to its well being. It provides for the observance of contracts and the safety of property; it protects public health; provides, supervises, and endows education; carries on necessary public industries and utilities; owns public lands and provides public pleasure grounds, and occasionally makes provision for art and music, as well as carrying on a multiplicity of other functions similar to these. We have it do for us what we cannot realize acting alone, or what we do not care to turn over to private or semi-private organizations. In the modern state, government has actually come to be considered not only an agency exercising ordering and regulatory functions, but also as a great constructive social agency—a means of enabling the mass of men to realize social good on the largest possible scale. In fact, it protects, encourages, and occasionally even establishes other institutions that serve these various constructive purposes. Hence, it is almost everywhere the largest and most powerfully equipped institution within society. In fact, it is the institution through which a society acts as a unit in providing for its own well being. It is continually invading new social provinces and administering them for the people; there seem to be no limits to its range. It is not only the final maker of social control, but is becoming the general agent for providing all public needs.

The legal institutions are also worthy of special mention. By law, we really mean the rules of the game of organized life; rules of the game that are the sum of the general principles of social conduct as found in the moral code of a people which have been made definite, standard, and punishable, because they are necessary to the achievement of the social purposes of the group. It has been the institu-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. HETHERINGTON and MUIRHEAD, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

tion used through the ages whereby men in groups have crystallized their modes of right living, kept their attention on them, and definitely checked them when they violated them, by definite punishments. Roscoe Pound says:

The occasion for law is that we have to live together in civilized society under conditions in which claims and demands and desires conflict or overlap, and these claims or demands or desires must be adjusted or reconciled so as to bring about a maximum of satisfaction with a minimum of friction and waste, if civilization is to be maintained, furthered and handed on.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the law is a device which society uses to regulate human conduct and group conduct and to promote those types of conduct which at any given time seem desirable or necessary. While law is a prohibition or limitation upon some action, it actually protects the individual against interference with or destruction of his freedom by the violent, the ruthless, the exploiters.

Like certain other major institutions, the legal are divided and specialized, and assist a host of other institutions in their operation. Thus, for example, in the economic field, legal institutions fix and guarantee the presuppositions underlying the economic order; they regulate bargaining and property, they affect and regulate production and distribution.<sup>2</sup> In the religious field they sometimes guarantee religious liberty. They serve similar functions in many other fields.

There are a host of other political institutions, each with their appropriate associations and organizations. Thus, legislatures are primarily organized groups whose function it is to make and repeal law; the judiciary and courts are institutions for administering justice; the police and military are organized groups for the maintenance of order; public-health boards and officers establish public-health

<sup>1</sup> "Social and Economic Problems of the Law," *Am. Acad. Pol. Soc. Sci.*, Vol. 1, p. 136, March, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. LLEWELLYN, K. N., "Legal Institutions and Economics," *Am. Econ. Rev.*, Vol. 15, pp. 665-683, December, 1925.

principles and standards and enforce them; departments and boards of education are bodies selected to establish and administer education for the state or its subdivisions, and so on.

#### ✓ 4. THE RELIGIOUS FIELD

The function of religious institutions is to satisfy and canalize man's basic religious needs. Man yearns for inner peace as he perceives his greater natural and social world. He is in fear of the unknowns and inexplicables about him, especially a supernatural and altogether irresistible power. His life experiences are with more than he can explain or comprehend, and yet the reality of these experiences, is beyond question.

He contemplates the vast, inexplicable, and incomprehensible cosmos, the stupendous forces and processes, the inexorable laws of nature, which he but dimly comprehends, and the meaning and purpose of which he cannot understand . . . He feels himself in the presence of something which passes comprehension. His comfort, his peace of mind, even life itself, depend upon some explanation of and some adjustment to this unreckonable and inexplicable. In brief, he wants security and certainty against mischance and the unknown in their innumerable forms, whether they are social or cosmic. He needs some escape from the ills of life, some mode of reconciliation as a policy of welfare, some sort of explanation. Hence, in every group religion is a deliberate attempt to get into helpful relationship with powers believed to be able to provide the satisfaction for felt needs, to provide for individual and group self-maintenance in confronting the unknown and all-powerful, to establish, in a measure, some control over the unknown, to get into harmony with the secret of the universe.<sup>1</sup>

Man also wants a sense of security and eternity in an insecure and changing world. He wants ultimates and absolutes.

The great religious systems are all comprehensive attempts to combine in institutional forms the ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, and organizations that will, in a measure, at least, satisfy these basic and universal needs. They all

<sup>1</sup> HERTZLER, J. O., "Social Progress," p. 532.

seek to harmonize the individual with the universe and give him a sense of adjustment to a power or powers immanent in it. The peoples embracing one or the other of these various religious systems form associations which, in turn, establish and standardize and make permanent methods of belief and action which in their opinion or as the result of their experience seem to meet their religious needs. A given church with its form of worship, creed, ceremonies, theology, literature, organizations, and buildings is a concrete illustration in point. It is both a definite association of and an institutional device for holding together and perpetuating the ideas and practices of the people of the given religious group. It regulates a whole mass of human relations.

## 5. THE ETHICAL FIELD

The ethical institutions consist of the standardized or systematized and more or less permanent ideas of right and wrong, or good and bad, in conduct among a people, along with the accompanying principles, customs, and codes. They tend to set up ways of acting which are approved of and designate others which are definitely tabooed by the given group or society. Ethical institutions exist among all peoples and are brought into existence by the circumstance that men *must* act while among their fellows. Some of these acts may bring ill to others, particularly if generally practiced. Hence, to make unavoidable social behavior at least neutral instead of harmful from the point of view of social good, and preferably conducive to good, every social group has established principles and forms of conduct that are right. These principles and forms of conduct have developed in a given society out of its experience, are prescribed for practically all of its members, though exceptions are often condoned, and are supported by group opinion which voices approval or disapproval.

Ethical institutions are particularly significant because of the inner way in which they operate; for their success

depends upon systematizing the ideals and motives, the valuations and choices of men regarding their social conduct. Their first purpose is to condition men's social motives, which alone determine the morality of their behavior. They also feel an obligation to contribute to the thinking as well as the practice incident to social adjustment and social vitality.

In fact, among all the institutional fields, the ethical institutions are most deficient in organizational forms, especially specialized associations and physical extensions. This is due to the fact that, because of their very nature, they come into play in all the various obligations—professional, civic, domestic, philanthropic, social, etc.; they express themselves through and objectify themselves almost entirely in other institutional relationships—sexual relations, domestic relations, economic relations, political relations, legal relations, play relations, health relations, etc., though there are some loose associations for the discussion of ethical principles and theory. All the situations and relations in social life create demands for definite notions and forms of the good. Every other institution has its ethical aspect, and here institutionalized ethical concepts and forms preside.

It will be seen particularly that ethical institutions lie behind and go deeper into social conduct than the special institutions devised to maintain social order, namely, government and law, which use punishment. While these are indispensable, they often produce only forced conduct—behavior that is unwilling, perfunctory, or bare minimal conformity. This is not adequate to make a strong and united social living together. The rank and file must have notions of what *ought* to prevail, as well as what *must* prevail. They must feel the persuasive power of the social imperative, have positive approvals and resolves, and feel right social action as a demand of conscience. This is the peculiar function of ethical institutions to do.

## 6. THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC FIELDS

Educational institutions are necessary for a variety of reasons. There is first the necessity of preparing the children and youth for a life in the groups of which they are a part—the family, local community, state, and humanity as a whole—that is consistent with public welfare. This means essentially that there must occur that conditioning of their responses through constant contact with personality-forming elements and agencies that will produce individuals whose social capacities have been stimulated and who have had developed in them habits of mutual obligation and social responsibility. Another reason is that the children must be trained in the use of the institutions of their group.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the complexity of society is so great today and there is such a vast amount of basic experience and knowledge in the possession of every civilized community, much of which is indispensable for the entire population if it is to live efficiently and dynamically, and this must be imparted to each successive generation. There is also the necessity of imparting skills and giving a measure of preparation for livelihood. Beyond these lie the necessity of giving to as many of the population as possible advanced education: making available all the best of the world's inventions along all lines, providing contacts with its cultures, giving by careful training a degree of insight into and a mastery of the various phenomena that bear on human well being, preparing men and women for the performance of the community's necessary tasks, etc.

The foremost educational device is the school. Its purpose is formal and systematic instruction of all the youth as distinct from the well-intentioned but partial, spasmodic, and often irresponsible instruction received in the family, and the informal and haphazard education by mere social contact. It is the special educational agency

<sup>1</sup> This subject will be discussed at length in Chap. VIII on "The Transmission of Institutions."



for carrying on the above-mentioned necessary tasks, and with its trained personnel, its special principles and methods, and its special plant and equipment, does it more efficiently and economically than any other educational device. It has come to be one of the primary social institutions. In addition to the school there are various other organizations and associations carrying on educational functions such as colleges, universities, reading and study clubs, extension departments and correspondence schools, discussion groups and forums, the press in many of its forms, the libraries, museums and galleries, the lyceums and chautauquas, and so on.

Scientific institutions satisfy the vital need of giving us systematic agencies for analyzing by appropriate means the various phenomena of all kinds—cosmic, natural, social—that bear upon human living and understanding, classifying and stating the findings in some standard way so that they are universally usable, then controlling these phenomena thereby in the interests of human well being, and finally providing in a degree at least the power of predictability. In brief, the function of science is the continually better adjustment of the individual to his physical and social environment. Research is the organized technique of science for its own propagation. It will therefore be seen that the scientific institutions provide essential materials and the necessary solutions of the problems of practically all of the other institutional fields.

Significant objective forms are the various science departments of the colleges and universities with their scientific standards, their trained staffs, and special equipment; the research bureaus, institutes and foundations; and the various scientific societies, local, national and international.

Modern conditions of living and intercourse, and modern problems, and modern ideals and values are making these educational and scientific institutions absolutely indispensable. Without them the barest physical subsistence would be impossible, the fruits of human discovery would be lost,

the immaterial conditions of civilized life would not be available, man's powers and abilities would not be tapped or developed, we would have no means of coping with the life and problems of the future, and the finer creations of the human spirit could not be enjoyed.

## 7. THE COMMUNICATIVE FIELD

Bound up especially with the preceding groups of institutions are those that enable men to communicate their desires, ideas, discoveries, and culture materials from man to man, from place to place, and from time to time. These, however, are also the basis of nearly all other institutions, for without communication most of them could not exist at all; in fact, the groups that use them could not exist, and the few that could exist would be of a most rudimentary nature, much as they are in animal societies. In fact, the communicative institutions could be called the most indispensable institutions. They are forced upon men by the fact that they are thrown into contact with their fellows and must cooperate, and in so doing have to convey impressions and express thoughts. The chief form, of course, is language, and writing is an outgrowth of this.

Language is purely a cultural product. It consists of intentionally and deliberately produced vocal sounds that have a specific and arbitrary meaning in the given society; that is, a great array of sounds are conventionalized or given standard and precise meanings. These various sounds in combination convey the ideas, desires, and impressions. When these auditory symbols are translated into the form of physical objects, or lines and other conventionalized figures or symbols, we have writing or written speech. Writing not only makes the ideas expressed more permanent, but also transmissible in space and time. Language thus is the basis not only of all trade and human intercourse, all arts and science, all literature, but is the means of providing a social heritage, and the chief tool in thought itself.

In recent times, the various mechanical communicative devices—those connected with printing, the telegraph, the telephone, the radio, the railway and other means of rapid transit—have enormously increased the scope and desirability of those ancient institutions, and have produced a vast array of new institutions or pseudo-institutions. Notable examples are the postal service and the great public utility systems in the field of communication.

#### 8. THE ÆSTHETIC AND EXPRESSIONAL FIELD

The tremendous urges for expression in men, usually vastly stimulated by association with their fellows, especially the expression of beauty in its various forms and the expression of thought, and the desire to enjoy and appreciate beautiful things, have led to this important group of social institutions. The systematization and standardization of the expressional forms and the groupings of interests and people around them has led to their institutionalization. Especially significant are the institutions and semi-institutional forms, concerned with both the production and appreciation of beauty and thought, that group themselves around the arts of painting, sculpture, music, the drama, the dance, poetry, literature, and architecture. There are several reasons for the more or less fixed or institutionalized forms that expression takes or is expected to take. The æsthetic and other expressional impulses, being bound up with feelings and emotions, and hence sometimes lacking restraint, are subjected, usually to a very minor extent, to certain somewhat standardized forms of expression by the group which are approved and praised. This grows out of the fact that art is a discipline and that art must be social. Secondly, these forms of expression are more or less regular because they must be done within the range of certain capacities, physical and mental, certain colors or combinations of color, certain sounds, materials, languages, instruments, and so on. These are perhaps not so much standardizing elements as they are determiners.

Finally since æsthetic expression is through the medium of individuals, who may be highly unique and even eccentric, it needs to be more or less conventionalized to make it understandable and give it currency. Hence, for example, the canons of art.

In a broader social sense, it may be said that the function of æsthetic institutions are two: first, to take the expressional impulse, the emotional state of the artist—usually an exceptional individual, at least in a special way—as he or she has the grand moment, sees or feels the sublime, articulates the moment of beauty or triumph, conceives the great thought, the perfect rhythm, receives the urge to delineate form or combine color, and enable him to present it in the most attractive and permanent form, and make it so accessible and understandable that it can be transmitted; second, to give the rank and file of men, who, while they almost universally have artistic impulses, do not have them to a sufficient degree for expression, or lack the ability or opportunity to do so, the vicarious enjoyment of great art impulses, and that elevation of thought and emotion that only a great art object, fully understood and appreciated, can give; in brief, it enables them to live the grand moments.

Art in its various forms gives rise to schools of art—schools in which lovers of beauty are trained to see the beautiful in particular forms and under particular conditions, and then catch it and put it in some more or less permanent and transmissible form for enjoyment, though this is not true of the dance; to galleries and museums, theaters where art objects or artistic expression are displayed, to various associations for the mutual stimulation of artistic impulse, for the study, advancement or enjoyment of art, and so on.

## 9. THE HEALTH AND RECREATIONAL FIELD

Dense populations and modern industry, with their aggravated problems of living, along with modern science

and psychology, with their analyses of human nature, have emphasized the necessity of providing in a systematic way for public health and to an increasing extent for recreation. So far, most of these institutional functions have been conducted by certain other institutions, but they are rapidly developing an identity of their own. Worthy of mention are such concrete or associational forms as hospitals for the physically and mentally sick and incompetent, clinics, health centers, child-placing agencies, parks, playgrounds, theaters, dancehalls, etc.

#### 10. THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF INSTITUTIONS

For purposes of examination it is necessary to look at each form of social structure in something like isolation from the others. Actually, of course, the structural complexities of social life make a necessary and coherent whole. All are part of that blend of social elements we call "society." Hence a given institution does not stand alone; it is in no sense an independent or distinct entity acting by itself, or capable of being fashioned, sustained, or modified at will to suit the fancy; its evolution is not an independent evolution. Any survey of institutions shows that they are all part and parcel of an organic whole: in their functioning and evolving inextricably bound up with other social institution; each not only acting and reacting upon all others in their own field, but also those in other fields, as well as being intimately connected with other coexisting social forms.<sup>1</sup> The family, for example, is bound up with the school, religion, and the state. Marriage is at once a domestic, a civil, and a religious institution among most people. Cole, emphasizing especially the interrelation of domestic and political institutions, states:

The state regulates the relations between individuals by enacting laws dealing with marriage and its dissolution, the care of children, the conduct arising out of sexual relationships in all their forms.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.* Vol. III, p. 1532.

<sup>2</sup> "Social Theory," p. 86.

Hobhouse referring also to the family in this connection states:

It is affected by a complex mass of social factors which do not take their origin from the life of the family as such but which impinge upon, and may gradually modify, that life. It is affected, for example, by religious conceptions, by economic conditions, by class or caste distinctions. It is affected, probably, by physiological causes of the nature of which we are in ignorance, which determine the relative number of the sexes.<sup>1</sup>

And what is true of the family is true of most other institutions. They do not stand alone; they continually bear upon each other and produce mutual modifications varying widely in degree and manner.

The value and full development of society depends on the successful cooperation and coherence of the various institutions and the other elements of the social order. All must be consistent with each other. In so far as they serve their various functions and in so far as their purposes are complementary and necessary for social well being, we have a coherent and good society; but if they are mutually contradictory and irreconcilable they have a thwarting and retarding effect, and a strained social state exists.

At the same time it must be remembered that there is a fundamental division of labor among institutions in social evolution and in social life. Hence it is unwise for institutions to be too ambitious and overlap and duplicate efforts. The Church may permissibly do some educating but its main task is to advance spirituality, transform conduct, and promote the Kingdom of God. Law also may do some instructing but its chief function is to order various relations. In a well-organized and properly functioning society all the parts must be present and each must perform its proper functions.

Not only are the various institutions interdependent with each other, but they have a reciprocal influence in the general social process and its constituent processes.

<sup>1</sup> "Social Evolution and Political Theory," pp. 121-122.

For, while institutions are products, the results of social processes, they also play their part in the social process and effect the various special social processes. After their establishment, their relation to society is one of reciprocity. The society which constructs and adopts them finds itself adopted and moulded by them in turn. Stuckenberg points out that the people who adopt a constitution and form a state fix the rule by which they and their successors are to be governed. The citizens bind themselves; the laws are final and mark the limits of freedom and action.<sup>1</sup> The same may be said of the people who adopt the capitalistic institutions. They thereby put themselves in charge of processes that will affect them in a multitude of ways. The creed, the polity, the ritual of churches are also regulations which modify living in marked ways. This principle applies to all institutions. They make the grooves in which societies move; they lay the track for the future course.<sup>2</sup> They are the effects of processes but also always the conditions and occasionally the originators of other processes. These facts emphasize the importance of the social scientist knowing the ways in which the institutions are interdependent and the manner in which they interact with social processes if he is to have a clear conception of the social process and social order.

#### 11. A SUMMARIZING DEFINITION OF INSTITUTIONS

It is appropriate and desirable to summarize concisely at this point the essential nature of a social institution. A social institution is a complex of concepts and attitudes regarding the ordering of a particular class of unavoidable or indispensable human relationships that are involved in satisfying certain elemental individual wants, certain compelling social needs, or other eminently desirable social ends. The concepts and attitudes are condensed into mores, customs, traditions and codes. Individually,

<sup>1</sup> "Sociology, the Science of Society," Vol. I, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> See also HETHERINGTON and MUIRHEAD, "Social Purpose," p. 121.

the institution takes the form of habits approved and conditioned in the individual by the group; socially it is a structure, evidencing itself in standardized and ordered relationships and often finding additional functional effectiveness through associations, organizations, and physical extensions. ~ Every operative and controlling activity of a given society takes place through institutions. Hence, every great field of social life has its collection of institutions ranging from those which satisfy vital and permanent needs to those relatively superficial and transitory.

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## CHAPTER V

### THE SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF SOME OUTSTANDING PRIMITIVE INSTITUTIONS

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, no attempt is being made to supplement, or even coordinate, the work of the cultural anthropologists, but rather to draw certain theoretical conclusions of significance for this study from their examinations and analyses of the social institutions of primitive peoples. The social sciences are coming to be convinced that primitive cultures must not be overlooked or despised if a proper understanding of the present social scheme is to be had; and institutions are an integral and all-important part of culture. An impartial study of primitive institutions reveals unsuspected but nevertheless highly useful facts regarding causes and development, basic principles, and necessary cautions of great significance to the social theorist; it shows an unfolding culture, with its combinations of causes, a great variety of conditioning factors, and endless intricacies and diversities of development, that are producing a great and changing array of institutional patterns; in many cases, it presents the germs out of which have unfolded many of the contemporary institutions of civilized society as well as demonstrating what the institutions have thrown off and added in the course of their development, what modifications of function there have been, and why these have occurred.

In the last analysis, we have no other way of getting at such facts except through the study of primitive institutions, for as Andrew Lang said:<sup>1</sup> The origins of our human society cannot be *historically* traced behind the institutions of the races now lowest in the scale of culture. But this

<sup>1</sup> "Social Origins," p. 3.

is no disadvantage as Sumner and Keller point out when they say:<sup>1</sup> "They (primitive institutions) are nearer to nature and may be studied with fewer intrusions of the subjective element and bias."

The specific purpose of this chapter is to take certain typical primitive institutions, some of which have their counterparts in civilized societies, and some of which are distinctly primitive and disappear in the higher reaches of culture, and briefly examine these various institutions with respect to their prevalence and antiquity, the real or supposed reasons underlying them, something of the stages or degrees of their development, or at least the transformation through which they have gone, and point out specifically or by contrast for those still existing their similarity to and variation from their civilized counterparts. Certain scientific precautions must be kept in mind, however.

## 2. THE SCIENTIFIC INTERPRETATION OF PRIMITIVE INSTITUTIONS

The older anthropology, being based upon an inadequate number of improperly collected facts regarding primitive peoples, and being dominated by the Spencerian principle of magnificent generalization, came to rest upon various constructions and fixities that were quite apart from the facts. Modern anthropology, however, is based on extensive field work of trained specialists, done with method, purpose, and knowledge of the problems involved. It studies cultures and their institutions by direct observation; and compares them by era and place. Its conclusions are dictated by the facts, and do not have to coincide with any preconceived notions, or fit into any ideal scheme. As a result of this it is seen that there are no simple solutions to the riddles of anthropology, that the quest for general formulæ of cultural evolution must be abandoned, that uniqueness rather than uniformity of cultures is the outstanding fact. Social evolution is multilinear; peculiarities of history, location, and contact produce a dis-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 35.

inctive culture for each people; particular cultural forms which a primitive society presents do not always mark a necessary stage, but may be anomalies or phenomena of degeneration. As Sapir puts it:<sup>1</sup>

Social institutions are no longer being studied by ethnologists as generalized phenomena in an ideal scheme, with the specific local details set down as incidental avatars of the spirit. The present tendency among students of primitive society is to work out the details of any given institution or social practice for a selected spot, then to study its geographical distribution, or, if it is a composite of various elements, the distribution of each of these elements, and gradually to work out by inferences of one kind and another a bit of strictly localized social history.

We see now that the institutions of primitive peoples do not compose a consistent logical scheme, but are rather a seething mixture of conflicting principles. "Out of a common humanity every people has developed a special life of its own, with special characteristics and special institutions."<sup>2</sup> Consequently, among the institutions of peoples of very nearly the same degree of civilization one finds the most astonishing similarities in institutions opposed by no less astonishing dissimilarities.

An examination of some of the more significant primitive institutions follows, the various studies being made in the light of the scientific rather than the classical anthropology.

### 3. PRIMITIVE MARRIAGE AND THE PRIMITIVE FAMILY

Nothing is known of the origin of marriage. A study of the social organization of the most primitive peoples on record or available for observation shows that various stern social needs had already forced upon them marriage institutions that were quite elaborate and relatively fixed and binding. Everywhere, even among the most simple or savage peoples, there are regulation and standardization in some form of the union of males and females, rather than unrestrained and irresponsible choice or acquisition by

<sup>1</sup> SAPIR, E., in OGBURN and GOLDENWEISER, "The Social Sciences and Their Interpretations," p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> HARTLAND, E. S., "Primitive Society," p. 157.

individuals, and these regulations are rigorously maintained. There is every reason to believe that this institution grew slowly out of the experience of groups which dictated the need of some sort of adjustment between the individual's physical desire for mating and the social responsibility bound up with that desire. As such, marriage is in no sense a biological necessity; the gratification of sex impulse does not require it; it is strictly a social construction to meet an imperative group necessity.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, as Hankins defines it, marriage "is the more or less formal and durable union of one or more men with one or more women in socially approved, and therefore moral, cohabitation."<sup>2</sup> Marriage establishes in a formal way certain marital rights and duties, though these vary widely from society to society. Almost everywhere among the more developed primitive tribes, where the part of both sexes in reproduction is definitely known, the sexual relations are made stable and given permanency for the additional reason that the fact of potential parenthood must be recognized and a stable and secure reproductive unit must be assured.

Among many primitive people marriage serves other functions in addition to the regulation of cohabitation. It establishes the basic maintenance organization, the economic and industrial unit, the self-sufficient economic aggregate.<sup>3</sup> Marriage is almost everywhere also a means of inaugurating an advantageous economic partnership between the sexes, of establishing the most logical association between the inseparable sexes in the struggle for livelihood.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, marriage is often a commercial

<sup>1</sup> Cf. GROVES, E. R., in GROVES and OGBURN, "American Marriage and Family Relationships," pp. 5-13.

<sup>2</sup> HANKINS, F. H., "Introduction to Science of Society," p. 600. See also E. WESTERMARCK, "History of Human Marriage," Vol. 1, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. LOWIE, R. H., "Primitive Society," pp. 65-66.

<sup>4</sup> "The institutions of marriage and industry began together. They are seen to be interlocked at the beginning, and will be found to have run parallel to one another and to have been correlative ever since." SUMNER and KELLER, "Science of Society," p. 148.

transaction in which the woman and sometimes the man are looked upon as an economic asset. It is the way a man acquires not only a woman or women with whom to cohabit, but also someone to work for him, to help in the procuring of food, to cook and keep house, to labor in the field, while he carries on other more- or less-specialized economic activities. It is a way of apportioning economic rights and duties as between primitive men and women. Hence, among most primitives man has not only a sex right but a property right in his wife or *vice versa* as the case may be.<sup>1</sup> After private property becomes common among a primitive people, marriage also acquires significance as a factor in its regulation, division, and transmission.

Another basic function of marriage in primitive society is to serve:

. . . as the means by which every individual born into a society, by which his or her social relations to the rest of the society are determined. Each child by virtue of being born as a child of a marriage, takes its place in the social structure. Certain members of the group are its relatives; others are not necessarily relatives, but they belong to the same clan or moiety; certain members of the community of the opposite sex are possible mates, while others are forbidden.<sup>2</sup>

Thus marriage as a primitive institution performs various functions; but, as is true in the case of other primitive institutions, the manner in which these functions are performed and the characteristics of the specific institutional forms vary widely from tribe to tribe, and follow no definite groupings, nor do they conform to any logic. The marriage may be contracted with very little or very simple ceremony or a great deal of very elaborate ceremony, embodying the most varied practices, though there are very few tribes that dispense altogether with ceremonial and ritualistic customs, customs whose repetition gives formality, impressiveness, and social rightness to the entrance

<sup>1</sup> See LOWIE, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> RIVERS, W. H. R., "Social Organization," p. 37; WESTERMARCK, E., *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 27; TOZZER, A. M., "Social Origins and Social Continuities," p. 127.

upon the important marriage relationship. Marriage may include a variety of combinations of the sexes ranging from one man and one woman, or monogamy, through one man and several women, known as polygyny, or several men and one woman, known as polyandry, to various kinds of group marriage; each of these combinations being the sanctioned form in the particular society, though the simple pair marriage seems eventually to become the prevailing form among the majority of the society. Among some people, when a man marries the eldest sister all the younger ones are regarded as his wives (sororate); among others, a man's wife or wives are automatically inherited by his younger brothers or kinsmen ranking as such in case of his demise (levirate). The individual may have to find his mate, or his parents or his clan will find her for him without the group (exogamy) or within the group (endogamy) or some specific clan within the group. The marriage may be a compact between groups, or between individuals. The man may contract marriage by capture, real or symbolic; by purchase; by rendering service; by elopement; or by mutual consent. In some tribes the wife, when acquired, will be a virgin; in others not, and her previous sexual experience will not diminish her value in the least. In some tribes, the married members will be permitted a certain amount of promiscuity, at least on certain occasions; in others not. Among some, marriage is entered into with the understanding that it is for an indefinite period or for life; among others it is not uncommonly entered into for a fixed or limited period. Among some tribes, marriage is nearly indissoluble; among others, the bond may be dissolved at the whim of either party, or by the intervention of either of their families. The standards of primitive man are not those of the Western Hemisphere, but, nevertheless, he has in his particular group fixed and permanent regulations and forms that are strictly and precisely enforced in the interest of social cohesion. How, how many, among whom, and when the

individual shall marry, and his rights and duties in marriage are definite, governed by basic elements in the form of traditions, rules, taboos, conventions, customs, and ordinances of his historical marriage institution, and these are generally recognized as a necessary part of societal organization. Everywhere the group prevents the individual from doing merely as he pleases in his mating.

Certain other peculiarities of marriage among primitives stand out. Contemporary primitives exhibit a substantial unanimity in ignoring the love interest, or at best subordinate it decisively to other considerations. There is frequently very little companionship between married couples. Material and social motives precede sentiment. In so far as it has become conjugal, poetical, or emotional, it is due to advance of civilization and belongs to the higher cultural grades.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore:

In every part of the world there are restrictions on the choice of a mate based on propinquity of relationship. Those who transgress the rules are guilty of the dread crime of incest. Within the narrowest family circle sexual relations are universally tabooed.<sup>2</sup>

In fact among some tribes not only are marriage relations taboo between certain remote blood kin which civilized peoples permit, but they have fictitious kin relations within which marriage is legally impossible.

Among almost all tribes marriage is not a sacrament, but a strictly civil institution. It has government, wherever there is any, and law behind it almost everywhere. Everywhere it is a normal life event, and everywhere everyone is expected to marry as soon as sufficiently physically matured to do so. In fact, sexual maturity may even be set aside. Among almost all primitives the condition of the unmarried is deplorable. All are supposed to assist in society's self-perpetuation and self-maintenance.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 1508-1509.

<sup>2</sup> LOWIE, R. H., *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. WESTERMARCK, E., "A Short History of Marriage," p. 31.

The family is the oldest and most universal institution that is known. Among all people, marriage is a phase of the family; it is a preliminary process in the establishment of a family and exists for the sake of the family.) No competent investigator doubts the existence of the family in some form or other all through human history and among all people, for it is the basic social agency for human survival and continuation. The helplessness of the human young at birth and the long duration of human infancy have everywhere forced into existence a standardized social unit that would both function at the birth of the child and provide for the physical and mental preservation and development of the children. The family is primarily for the young, in spite of the fact that the sexes are forced into a type of cooperation for livelihood. If marriage does not result in young, its partners cannot be said to constitute a family, though they may by kin ties be part of another family. (Thus everywhere the family is a primary group of father, mother, and their children, including at least two generations, and its primary function is to serve as the racial reproductive and preservative unit. As such the family constitutes the "unit-cluster of society," "the nuclear type of social organization." Everywhere the blood bond is the binding tie.)

Because it is the most natural and necessary grouping, it tends among most primitive peoples to also become the primary economic unit. Its maintenance functions unavoidably involve the economic side of life. The members of the family must be supported; hence, it is often a production unit among primitives and is always the consumption unit. Invariably it tends also to be the owning unit.

(Among most tribes the family tends also to be an educational and a religious unit of social life; though in the higher societies these functions tend to be administered by special institutions. Among all primitives, nearly all the educational activities are carried on by and in the family.)



(Like marriage the family takes various forms and has various aspects among different primitive peoples. The earliest family relationship undoubtedly consisted of the mother and her immature children. ) This expanded into a type of family commonly found among contemporary primitives, *viz.*, the mother, her children, and her brothers and sisters. The husbands here are not recognized as real members of the cohesive family group, but belong really to another group consisting of the husband, his mother, brothers, sisters, maternal aunts and uncles and other maternal ancestors. This family form is the matriarchal and may, in fact usually, does include matrilineal descent. The other form, found after the part of the father in procreation is definitely known, is the patriarchal family with patrilineal descent, which is just the reverse of the matriarchal and matrilineal.

Other lesser distinctions should be made. Among some peoples, the parents and their children are a family unit having their own dwelling and other property; among others, there are such extremes as the joint family with the joint house holding many families, and with jointly owned property. Various degrees of relationship are also recognized among various tribes, some including most remote blood bonds, others even creating fictitious relationships.

(Like most other institutions, the family has taken its characteristics from the society and the general environment of which it is a part. Finally, its functions and relative importance, as well as its form, among a particular people have changed from phase to phase of social evolution. Controlling such vital relationships it has everywhere and at all times had to meet the changing needs in the most appropriate way if the group was to survive and prosper.<sup>1</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> On the subject of this section see SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 1485-2056; LOWIE, R. H., "Primitive Society," pp. 14-79; WESTERMARCK, E., "History of Human Marriage," 3 vols; TOZZER, A. W., "Social Origins and Social Continuities," pp. 127-179; ELLWOOD, C. A., "Cultural

## 4. PRIMITIVE GOVERNMENTAL FORMS

Careful observation shows that, though the forms are not very precise, there undoubtedly exists, even among very low primitives, the rudiments of a regular government over and above the mere authority belonging to the head of each family. The oftfound notion of a state of anarchism or a lack of political organization among primitives is sheer fiction. Government of some sort has been necessary almost from the outset. No people, however rude, seem to be without a certain degree of political organization. This seems to arise out of the fact that as soon as a group consists of more than one family, needs for order and regulation arise which require some extra-family authority and perhaps also some civil organization for their satisfaction. The interest of the group must be felt over that of the individuals or families composing it. The conditions of its own existence demand that internal quarreling and violence be prevented as far as possible, rights of various kinds must be apportioned and guaranteed, duties must be fixed, rules must be established and enforced and some authority must be set up. A more or less organized community will enforce certain regulations that appear to be necessary for the welfare of the members of the group.

These functions are not necessarily carried on by the state among primitive peoples, for the state usually comes only when populations are large, fairly complex, and cover a considerable territory. But all the functions resident in the modern state are found in some form, sometimes very simple and sometimes surprisingly complex and well developed, in the governmental agencies of primitive peoples.

Among primitives, we find clans, tribes, federations and various other associations serving as units for carrying on

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Evolution," pp. 192-205; GROVES, E. R., and OGBURN, W. F., "American Marriage and Family Relationships," pp. 3-16; HANKINS, F. H., "An Introduction to the Study of Society," pp. 600-675; HOWARD, G. E., "History of Matrimonial Institutions," Vol. 1, pp. 3-250; SUMNER, W. G., "Folkways," pp. 342-416.

political functions prior to the appearance of the territorial state. Authority, *i.e.*, power of regulation, is variously centered in a chieftainship, headmanship, or kingship, single or dual, in a general council, or elders council, in monarchs, oligarchs, and even priests, although the most common expression of authority among primitives is of a democratic nature, with the power held by the elders or by a council selected by the people.<sup>1</sup> One-man rule is almost entirely absent in the most primitive communities, tending to come with governments that grow out of conquests, although there are some notable exceptions in Africa and Polynia, where fairly well-developed monarchies are found among rather primitive tribes. But no generalizations can be made; democracy exists in some tribes, extreme despotism among others.

The three chief departments of government—the legislative, executive, and judicial—are frequently so closely bound together that it is often impossible to separate them.<sup>2</sup> A tribal council or even a chief may have all three functions. Usually, they are only differentiated in the course of social evolution. Among most primitives the legislative function of government is not very important as compared with civilized governments, however, due to the fact that the law in effect is largely customary in its nature. Hence, the function of government is largely to exact obedience to traditional usage.<sup>3</sup>

The state itself like other social institutions, arises from many sources among primitive peoples, and under varying conditions, and comes into being gradually and almost imperceptibly. While in many cases it grows out of conquest and the necessity of maintaining a military hold upon the members and the land of the conquered tribe, this is by no means the only originating force. Among other tribes, it may grow out of hereditary classes or castes

<sup>1</sup> Cf. TOZZER, A. M., "Social Origins and Social Continuities," p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> TOZZER, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> LOWIE, R. H., "Primitive Society," p. 358.

assuming authority and having devolve upon them the responsibility for some sort of order; among others, it is religion which serves as a bond of union and a sanction for authority and out of this grow the political forms; again, it may be due to such economic factors as the accumulation of wealth, especially in the form of property, which requires cooperation for its protection and transmission; again, the state may be a spontaneous organization of contiguous peoples for mutual protection and for other forms of cooperation.<sup>1</sup> In any case the three essentials of the state—organization, authority, and law—would appear of necessity. The state among primitive peoples is always an institution developing in due time for the management and direction of societies as they become more evolved and complex. It is an agency for maintaining the order adjustments that the family, clan, and tribe, considered as civil agents, carry on in simpler societies.<sup>2</sup>

While law comes eventually to be bound up with government among primitive peoples, it is much older than government, at least in its more formal and organized form. It is so important that it is dealt with separately in the following section.

## 5. PRIMITIVE LAW

Primitive peoples always have at least a degree of social organization, and this organization is presided over and maintained by some form of law. Even the lowest races have more or less explicitly understood rules. As Malinowski says:

Law and order pervade the tribal usages of primitive races, they govern all the humdrum course of daily existence, as well as the leading

<sup>1</sup> Cf. LOWIE, R. H., "Origins of the State."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. for this section in general, SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 459-523, 629-734; LOWIE, R. H., "The Origins of the State"; LOWIE, "Primitive Society," pp. 358-426; TOZZER, "Social Origins and Social Continuities," pp. 199-216; JUDD, C. H., "The Psychology of Social Institutions," pp. 309-322; RATZEL, F., "The History of Mankind," Vol. 1, pp. 129-141; WALLIS, W. P., "An Introduction to Anthropology," Chap. XXIX.

acts of public life, whether these be quaint and sensational or important and venerable.<sup>1</sup>

Social needs demand such law, for primitive aggregates, as Hartland points out:<sup>2</sup>

Whether of few or many, whether temporary or permanent, necessitate rules governing the relations of the individuals composing them to one another and to the aggregate, and the relations of the aggregate and of individuals composing it to similar aggregates and to alien individuals in general. Without these rules the assembly or the band would be a mere agglomeration of individuals guided only by their individual wills: it could not continue to exist.

These governing rules are the laws which the individuals and aggregates alike obey. They consist of complex arrangements of effective social constraints which make the primitive tribesmen keep to their obligations.

These laws among primitive people are unwritten, largely because writing is unknown, or, if known, not in common use. But the laws, nevertheless, are fixed and well known, and as standardized and authoritative as the codified laws or the legislative enactments of civilized people. Primitive laws are practically identical with customs which give to group life coherence and stability, except that they are more explicit, and are usually punishable in some special way by some authority, personal or public. Certainly all laws have their basis in custom. It is for this reason that primitive rules have sometimes been refused the name of laws; but if they govern properly the relations of individuals and communities, enforce the performance of necessary transactions, are generally obeyed and felt to be binding, and are feared because of threatened punishment, they do everything that the institution of law is supposed to do.

This primitive custom law is based upon many generations of trial and error, and though it has its fictions and superstitions, it has in it those elements of group wisdom in the conduct of social life that have preserved and pros-

<sup>1</sup> MALINOWSKI, B., "Crime and Custom in Savage Society," p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> HARTLAND, E. S., "Primitive Law," pp. 1-2.

pered the group. Modern common law, which is the lineal descendant of primitive custom law, brings down to later stages of civilization this body of experience which no individual could secure within the period of a single lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike the case in civilized societies, the power that enforces primitive law is not necessarily organized or governmental; there may be a complete absence of central authority on watch to detect wrongdoers, or of any definite body to administer justice and mete out punishment. The enforcing power is often more indefinite and impersonal. Instruction of youth in fictions regarding the evils that befall wrongdoers, the desire to stand well in the community, the fear of ridicule and reprobation, and the feeling that the law is intimately bound up with present and eternal well being of the individual and perhaps also of the tribe, are exceedingly potent. Living in public more than we do, the life of the primitive is more open to the observation and censure of his fellows. Especially common as an enforcing aid is the fiction that these customary rules have been revealed by the gods and represent the divine will regarding human affairs, thus making their violation an affront to the gods themselves. On the other hand, among other tribes, again there are authorities, usually in the form of elders or chiefs, who have as one of their main functions the safeguarding and enforcing of the code, and the punishment of those who violate it.

Primitive law, of course, relates to rude conditions of life, but it covers a vastly larger number of departments of life than does law in modern life with its expanded forms, and greater freedom for the individual. Scarcely anything eludes the grasp of primitive law; it rules all aspects of social organization. Occupation, religious observance, the most intimate personal relations, planting and harvesting, and various strictly private affairs, as well as those relations and transactions that are legally regulated in civilized society, are governed by this law. Moreover, usually,

<sup>1</sup> See JUDD, C. H., "The Psychology of Social Institutions," p. 317.

every portion of the law is equally binding, has the same reputed origin, and is an equally sacred inheritance from the tribal ancestors.<sup>1</sup>

The law of most primitive peoples looks differently upon crimes committed within the tribe or a smaller group, and perpetrated on persons outside.<sup>2</sup> An act committed against a member of the group may be considered a crime and severely dealt with, but considered worthy of acclaim if directed toward a member of another group.<sup>3</sup>

## 6. PRIMITIVE PROPERTY AND ITS ALLIED INSTITUTIONS

The first forms of property are lost in the mist that surrounds the first infant steps of the race. But that something existed in the nature of property arrangements at that early time is certain, for as soon as there are two human beings there will need to be some more or less definite arrangement regarding the possession of at least some of the things in their environment. Property has to do with the use and the disposal right over materials essential to self-preservation; it is always a definite relationship between persons and groups regarding the ownership of movable and immovable corporeal things, incorporeal things, or human beings, that seem to be necessary in the opinion of the group in satisfying various needs, wants, and desires.<sup>4</sup> Its essence lies in the fact that most things cannot be used unless some sort of monopoly exists; two tribes cannot be very successful if they hunt in the same territory; two individuals or two clans cannot carry on agriculture con-

<sup>1</sup> HARTLAND, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> TOZZER, A. M., "Social Origins and Social Continuities," p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> On this section see HARTLAND, E. S., "Primitive Law"; HARTLAND, E. S., article on "Law" in "Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics"; MALINOWSKI, B., "Crime and Custom in Savage Society"; TOZZER, A. M., *op. cit.*, pp. 216-220; MARETT, R. R., "Anthropology," pp. 181-203; MAINE, SIR H., "Early History of Institutions"; ELLWOOD, C. A., "Cultural Evolution," pp. 206-215; LOWIE, R. H., "Primitive Society," pp. 397-400; SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 657-667.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. WESTERMARCK, E., "The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas," Vol. 2, p. 1.

veniently on the same plot; two men cannot properly use the same ornaments or tools or slaves. Things to be useful and usable must be exclusively available for certain specific individuals or groups. "The grades of limit on the supply are the grades of intensity of property."<sup>1</sup> Everywhere there is the need of order and definiteness in the use and disposition rights of things, and everywhere the need is met with property institutions. The peculiar thing about property, therefore; is not in explaining desire or want for certain things, but rather the fact that other individuals or groups with similar wants and desires should leave particular individuals or groups in undisputed possession or even allot to them a share of such things, and that these are definite arrangements generally observed for doing this.

The forms of property among primitives, like those of other institutions, are exceedingly irregular and variable. Generalizations regarding uniformities in its evolution are difficult and dangerous to make; one's only assurance in getting at the peculiarities of primitive property lies in discussing diversities. The type of property found varies, in general, with the nature of the particular group, and the degree of its development. There can be no hard-and-fast rule for all groups. Contrary to the opinions of the classical anthropologists, personal, joint, collective, and communal ownership in different things may exist at the same time in a given society.<sup>2</sup> Chattels, especially ornaments, dress, weapons and tools may be privately owned among even the most primitive tribes though all or some of them may also be communally owned by some;<sup>3</sup> incorporeal property as rights in songs, myths, dances, prayers, ceremonies, designs, and incantations are usually privately owned. The possibility of personal ownership of a great variety of things at a rude stage of social development has been

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> GOLDENWEISER, A. A., "Early Civilization," p. 137; LOWIE, R. H., "Primitive Society," p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> HOBHOUSE, WHEELER and GINSBERG, "Material Culture and Social Institutions of Simple People," p. 243; LOWIE, *op. cit.*, p. 223.



established beyond cavil by modern anthropology; the classical dogma of universal primitive communism is an absurdity—the result of an attempt to fit facts into theories.<sup>1</sup> Full-fledged communism among any given people concerning all things probably never has occurred.

In a given primitive society one part of the group may hold to one type of property for a given set of things and another part maintain another set of property forms. Even communal ownership of land has not been historically proven as a universal fact among primitive people. Some have it, and some do not. Some tribes have tribal, family, and individual tenure combined.

Thus the land may belong to the tribe, but within it any family may occupy and cultivate any land it chooses, and may retain it as long as it chooses . . . but the individual or family possession may also become a permanent ownership of a plot small or large within the tribal area.<sup>2</sup>

Among some peoples, while most of the land is tribal or belongs to clans or families, plots recently brought under cultivation by a man's individual labor are his own. On the other hand, among some pastoral peoples the land will be communally owned, while they will have a highly developed sense of private ownership as regards livestock. There are all sorts of property among primitives. Sumner and Keller summarize the point well when they say,<sup>3</sup>

The mores show a series of relations of things to persons, ranging from what might be called non-property all the way through to the most strictly private possession. There is non-property or nobody's property; then there is the arrangement by which any individual—one at a time—has the usufruct of property that belongs in a general way to his group; there is undivided or periodically divided joint property; public property; corporate property; administrative control over property; eminent domain; reversion of private property to the group; and a number of other intermediate forms that shade into one another like the colors of the spectrum.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. LOWIE, *op. cit.*, p. 235ff.

<sup>2</sup> HOBHOUSE, WHEELER and GINSBERG, *op. cit.*, p. 345.

<sup>3</sup> "The Science of Society," p. 269.

There is no regularity from tribe to tribe as to the forms of property existing among primitives; nor are sharp distinctions possible. It is not even a matter of social stage, but rather a strictly local matter resting upon the fact that the types of property existing among a people are those best adapted to the regulatory needs regarding the things of the society at the time. This fact of social utility and social appropriateness also plays the leading part in the changes that occur in the types of property; new and better types of ownership come with new conditions. Thus, among many primitive peoples, when they pass from the nomad or pastoral to the agricultural stage, and location becomes fixed, when land or at least a quality of land is competed for and has labor invested in it, or when it must be more and more intensively cultivated, it tends in time to become private property. On the other hand, property in human beings, who are used as field hands, may be very profitable in extensive agriculture but quite the opposite in intensive agriculture, and cease to exist. Thus all property rights and forms are conditioned by the exigencies of life.

Contract is an institution that grows out of property relationships among primitive peoples in the higher stages of social development. Contract or socially sanctioned and enforced agreement regarding the disposition of things or services comes only among a people who have a certain amount of freedom of movement and freedom of will; in brief, when they are freed from excessive group dominance and have some choice. Secondly, it is of no great consequence until the people have a considerable amount of private property carrying with it rights of personal use and possession and conversely private property on any considerable scale is impossible without control. Finally, it can only come among a primitive people when they have a well-regulated social order, usually in the form of a fairly well-developed state, to enforce and regulate contract, for there always must be a third party, powerful and authoritative, to secure to the property holder the

exclusive use of economic goods that he has acquired by agreement.

As soon as property acquires any significance among a people, another institution appears, namely, inheritance—the regulated form of property transmission at the death of the owner. But as in the case of the ownership of property, so also in its inheritance among primitive peoples, there are wide differences and a surprisingly high development, and the appearance of almost all the forms known among civilized peoples. The distinctive thing about all forms of inheritance is that they appear only when the family is the dominant feature of the organization; and it deals only with the transmission of private property within the family.<sup>1</sup>

The types of property that are transmissible vary according to a variety of factors. Among hunting or pastoral peoples, the hunting or grazing grounds are common property and cannot be divided; hence, the private and transmissible property could not be represented by anything but movable objects belonging to the deceased, usually articles made by him, and his slaves and occasionally his women and children. But even this came in a relatively late stage of development, for among many primitive peoples, the personal effects and strictly private property are buried with the deceased, and his chattels, that is, horse, slaves, and wives, are sacrificed on his grave. In the main, though, private property was achieved with a great deal of sacrifice and was much desired, and men wanted their precious possessions to go to those close to them; moreover, the relatives and intimates also wanted them. In the end, among most primitive peoples nearly everything was preserved and handed on.

The form of inheritance depends upon the type of family. Where the gentle organization exists, the relatives and members of the kindred clan take possession of the deceased's property without regard to the children. Where the maternal family has separated from the clan,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. RIVERS, W. H. R., "Social Organization," p. 103.

inheritance tends at first to go in the maternal and collateral lines. Where polyandry exists, inheritance goes sometimes in the female, and sometimes in the male line. In the paternal family, the inheritance usually passes definitely to the sons according to one arrangement or another, though a variety of forms of collateral transmission to brothers exist here, also. Where it goes to sons, the property, or at least most of the deceased's property, may pass equally to all his sons. Or primogeniture may exist in which case the eldest son of the one wife, or of the principal wife among polygynous peoples, inherits the property, though in some cases he inherits it only as an administrator for all the sons. Another common form is junior right, which makes the youngest child, usually the son, the principal or at least preferential heir.

Each form of inheritance exists for good social reasons. Primogeniture, for example, grows out of the fact that the eldest son is automatically the head of the family or clan and is the family priest; or, it grows out of military necessity, the eldest son being the chief of the clan. Family organization and conditions also are sometimes responsible; where marriage is late in life, owing to lack of tribal provision, or where life is shortened by hardship, the eldest son will be the only one old enough to administer the holdings. On the other hand, where all the sons of a family tend to be grown up at the father's decease each one claims a share. Junior right invariably appears where conditions are easy, where marriage is early, and where the family will disperse long before the father's death; and consequently the youngest son will be on the holding and naturally inherit it. But, of course, in each of these cases there are all sorts of variations; in some cases, conditions exactly the opposite of the rule exist. The special need is always met more or less appropriately but always also more or less uniquely.

Slavery is another institution based on the property institution that has considerable significance among primi-

tive peoples. It consists of generally accepted and standardized ownership of human beings whose services are secured by force. It is an institution which usually exists only at a certain stage in the development of a given people: the period when they are engaged in extensive agriculture, though outstanding exceptions occur here also.

Slavery begins in group conflict. Some disposition had to be made of the vanquished by the victors. Cannibalism passes, torture and slaughter become odious and distasteful. If a people have, at the same time, advanced economically to the point of agriculture, have a high standard of living, and desire a surplus, perhaps for purposes of exchange; and at the same time have an abundance of cheap, good, land, the captives are very likely to be used to carry on the monotonous, irksome, laborious, toil and drudgery incidental to agriculture. Thus, a certain set of economic conditions have favored, or even demanded, slavery; conversely, when economic conditions among a given people have ceased to call for slavery, it has fallen. The situation and its need justifies the institution. In its day among a given people it is an expedient adjustment, and an indispensable link in the people's evolution.<sup>1</sup> Since it necessitated oppression it was always strongly regulative. It is one of the few primitive institutions that are not likely to carry over to any extent into civilized life.<sup>2</sup>

## 7. PRIMITIVE EXCHANGE AND ITS RELATED INSTITUTIONS

These institutions are directly bound up with the problem of physical maintenance although they also have profound cultural significance, due to the contacts and the conse-

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> On the subject of this section see SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-350; HOBHOUSE, WHEELER and GINSBERG, "Material Culture and Social Institutions of Simple People," pp. 243, 345; LOWIE, R. H., "Primitive Society," pp. 205-256; ELLWOOD, C. A., "Cultural Evolution," pp. 83-191; LETOURNEAU, C. H., "The Evolution of Property"; SUMNER, W. G., "Folkways," pp. 261-307; HOBHOUSE, L. T., "The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas," Vol. 2, pp. 1-71.

quent exchange of inventions and cross-fertilization of ideas and institutions which they produce. While trade and exchange are extensively developed only in the higher cultures, they are found everywhere among primitives. Not only are they a widespread feature of savage culture, but they are exceedingly ancient, for there is abundant evidence of trade and exchange among Paleolithic Europeans. These institutions grow out of the fact that even among very primitive peoples some have things essential or desirable for the want satisfaction of others, but not possessed by these others, and *vice versa*. This supply of special goods may be due to control of deposits; to geographic location, as in the case of valleys where certain crops are possible or along certain bodies of water where certain kinds of fishing is possible; to certain skills, as in hunting or agriculture; to certain specialized industrial processes, as the manufacture of certain weapons, tools, and ornaments; and so on.

It is quite possible that this awareness of desirable things among other tribes first came as the result of war contacts and the appropriation of the things of value of the conquered. The enjoyment of these spoils led to tributes, fines, and compensations, all in kind, of course. Common also were raids and robberies as means of obtaining desired things. To avoid hostilities presents were given; sometimes there was a mutual exchange; and this is another antecedent. But most of these methods of acquisition of things from others either caused suspicion and fear and were an incitement to retaliation, or they resulted in the receipt of things not wanted. So everywhere various methods sprang up among contiguous or accessible peoples to provide opportunities for peaceful and even recurrent exchange. One form is that of "peaceful access," that is, access of aliens to materials which are limited as to distribution, such as natural deposits of flint and salt. Some other early forms are "silent trade," "dumb barter," and "deposit barter," the general principle of these being that

the articles for exchange are put in a certain well-known and appointed place—a market place—where security from attack is assured; other persons from other tribes then come and take these and put other articles of approximately equal value in their stead.<sup>1</sup> Thus, at a relatively early stage in the development of peoples, the advantages of continuous trading as compared with occasional looting is realized. Incidentally early trading is one of the factors that brought mankind into peaceful intergroup relations.

Peaceful trade once begun soon leads to the production of a surplus of the primitive group's specialty for exchange purposes, for even rudimentary exchange leads to progressively increased desires that demand satisfaction. Similarly, continually more complex and refined forms and agencies develop for facilitating the increasingly indispensable process. Market or exchange places come to be more definite and more widely known; trading comes to be face to face; more and more commodities are exchanged, and over continually wider areas as the means of transportation are improved; trading as a special vocation appears. To obviate the various difficulties incidental to barter, such, for example, as the necessity of having two parties each with goods suitable in kind, quality, and quantity to the other, and the difficulty of exchanging indivisible things like livestock for small quantities of divisible goods, money came into existence. All imaginable things having a high intrinsic value, especially if they can be used without alteration, serve as money among primitive peoples, both for intergroup and intragroup exchange. Its chief functions among savages, as among civilized peoples, is to serve as a convenient medium of exchange, and as a measure and store of value. Money goes through various stages of development until it consists of a commodity that has reasonable stable value, portability, durability, and divisibility without the parts losing their proportionate value—usually one of the more precious metals. Token money

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 153, 158.

also makes its appearance surprisingly early. Money makes exchange flexible, and property fluid and transferable. At a relatively early stage banking appears; that is, facilities for entrusting things of value to others either for safekeeping, or for the purpose of borrowing other things upon the security of the things deposited.<sup>1</sup>

These simple forms of exchange and exchange aids show clearly the institutional characteristics that are their essence. The other exchange institutions, such as credit in most of its forms, interest, and so on, come usually only after a people have reached a relatively high state of economic development. But in every case, it is a pertinent need in the satisfaction of expanding material wants calling forth an appropriate organized means of satisfying it.<sup>2</sup>

#### 8. THE PRIMITIVE COMMUNICATIVE INSTITUTIONS

When we think of communicative institutions, we have in mind language and writing and the later forms of communication based on these. We cannot go back to the origins of language which probably developed much earlier than writing, because its formation has been a gradual process extending through the ages, a process which is still going on. No tribes or peoples are known who are so low in the scale of life that they do not possess some form of language. We are quite sure that in some form it goes back to the first human groups, for society and culture, even in their most rudimentary forms, are utterly inconceivable without at least some simple but more or less standardized and commonly understood means of com-

<sup>1</sup> WALLIS, W. D., "An Introduction to Anthropology," p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> For other primitive economic institutions as well as further material on this section see BUXTON, L. H. D., "Primitive Labour"; HOYT, E. E., "Primitive Trade"; MÜLLER-LYER, F., "The History of Social Development," Books II, III; WALLIS, W. D., "An Introduction to Anthropology," pp. 109-221; SUMNER, W. G., and A. G. KELLER, "The Science of Society," pp. 45-86; SUMNER, W. G., "Folkways," pp. 141-172; BÜCHER, K., "Industrial Evolution," pp. 41-82; HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Social Development," pp. 281-292.



munication. As Judd points out,<sup>1</sup> all of the social arts which man has devised were undoubtedly subsequent in their appearance to language, and this also applies to the formation of all institutions with the possible exception of the family. Hence he feels justified in referring to language as "the fundamental institution."

In so far as the individual is involved in the origin of language, it came as a direct outgrowth of his elemental nature as he was forced to orientate himself in a constantly changing physical and social environment. He had to convey impressions, express thoughts, cooperate with others in meeting the exigencies of living. In fact, the very powers of thought and the ability to solve problems necessitated means of articulating them. Whether language, as such a means of expression, followed the evolutionary forms indicated by the older anthropologists, and passed through distinct and separate stages of utterance, that is, such a sequence as grimaces, gestures, tones, and then articulate speech, is questionable and has no support from facts. But, as Tylor shows:<sup>2</sup>

. . . it may be plausibly maintained, that in early stages of the development of language, while as yet the vocabulary was very rude and scanty, gesture had an importance as an element of expression, which in conditions of highly organized language it has lost.

Gesture language, a system of representing objects and ideas by a rude and more or less natural or spontaneous outline gesture, imitating their most striking features, however, was commonly conventionalized and abridged (or institutionalized) to save time and trouble. Many of these gesture forms still survive in modern face-to-face contacts, especially in our various salutations and greetings, and our ways of beckoning and repelling. In the main, gesture language is a natural mode of expression common to mankind in general, the best evidence of this unity being the ease with which any savage from any

<sup>1</sup> "The Psychology of Social Institutions," p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> TYLOR, E. B., "Early History of Mankind," p. 15.

country can understand and be understood in a deaf-and-dumb school. It is a method of utterance independent of speech.

On the other hand, word languages, being strictly inventions, are infinitely numerous and diverse, there being many hundreds of mutually unintelligible tongues. They show the greatest differences in sounds, and the same sounds may have exactly opposite meanings. Each of the various languages and dialects that have appeared through time have had to compete with the others with which they made contacts. Through this process the less-well-organized languages perished, or at least only their better elements survived and were fused with other languages. Each tended, in a measure, to adapt itself to local use. These contacts have tended to improve the languages. But, even so, it is generally contended that the development of language between its savage and its advanced stages has been made in its details, and not in its principles; it is, in the main, but the language of savages "more or less improved in structure, a good deal extended in vocabulary, made more precise in the dictionary definition of words."<sup>1</sup> The actual human processes that hewed out the basic principles of the various language structures are shrouded in remote antiquity. Researches among primitives, and comparative studies, only provide limited materials for discrete surmises.

Language was the social institution that was fundamental to the formation, prosperity, and perpetuation of primitive groups and societies. First, it is essential to all mental and social operations.<sup>2</sup> It is the means whereby the members of these groups exchange ideas and help one another; the means whereby complex interadaptation occurs. It becomes a guide to the thought and effort of every member of the group, child or adult; it forces the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. TYLOR, E. B., "Primitive Culture," Vol. 2, pp. 445-446.

<sup>2</sup> The materials of this paragraph are drawn largely from Judd, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-211.

members to become alike in their association of ideas. Group solidarity depends on it, since it is the only means of diffusing the common elements in the experience of individuals. It makes possible common interests and joint modes of action, which are essentials to the very existence of a community. All the social relations are thought out and arranged through the use of words. Language is the means whereby memory secures for the group its valuable experiences. Hence, the necessity of institutionalizing it.

All primitive groups that have made any advance have developed some form of writing. Language only makes possible face-to-face communication. There is a need for some standardized means of communication between those separated in space and time; some means, more permanent and reliable than memory for recording valuable ideas, lore, knowledge and other important group experiences; and some means of articulating, storing, and transmitting culture elements that dispenses with the human intermediary. Writing in its various forms was developed to meet this need. Like language, it did not burst into full flower over night. Its development, though it followed certain principles, is not regular nor logical. Mnemonic helps (reminders of various kinds), pictographs (of which hieroglyphics are a form), ideograms, and phonograms<sup>1</sup> have all played their part, but they have not necessarily

<sup>1</sup> These may be resolved into picture writing and word writing. In picture writing, which springs up naturally like gesture language, an event is set in view in the form of a picture so as to serve as a message to a distant place or a record for a future time. It is found among savages in all quarters of the globe and its principle is the same everywhere. Paintings or scratchings or carvings by savages found on rocks have a similarity of form and meaning, whether we find them in North or South America, in Siberia, Africa, or Australia. The pictures of untaught children in civilized countries are like them. Word writing represents a much higher stage. It uses symbols or characters (letters, syllables, or words) to represent standard and meaningful sounds of the language. While this makes a more complicated system it infinitely increases the diversity and refinement of the thought that can be expressed.

all been present nor have they followed a sequence in the formation of any particular system of writing. Our modern alphabet of twenty-six letters, now the basis of probably the most economical and at the same time the most adequate of all writing systems, goes back into primitive times, and represents the culmination, if not the final stage, of a long and difficult evolutionary process that includes the invention and the experimentation of many epochs and many cultures. But the outlines of the steps and processes are blurred by the action of many forces. Out of writing have grown all records and all literatures; it has been one of the greatest of all incitements to great thinking, and the greatest of all educational agencies. But, language and writing are still in flux, constantly subject to the demands of a changing world.

All the later communicative institutions have been built upon language and writing; are in fact, essential mechanical agencies to produce greater accuracy, greater speed of transmission, or for increasing the area of their use.<sup>1</sup>

## 9. PRIMITIVE ÆSTHETIC INSTITUTIONS

Æsthetic institutions are by no means the offshoot of a highly civilized social state, for as far back as there is any record of human culture there is evidence also of artistic employment. The occasions for art production are fundamental in human nature and appear wherever man tries to live and cope with his surroundings.<sup>2</sup> Civilization has merely taken this product of human nature and nurtured it to a fuller and more varied growth.

<sup>1</sup> On the subject of this section in general see SWEET, H., "The History of Language"; DE LAGUNA, T., "Factors of Social Evolution," pp. 277-303; MASON, W. A., "A History of the Art of Writing"; JUDD, C. H., "Psychology of Social Institutions," pp. 160-186; KROEBER, A. L., "Anthropology," pp. 87-136, 263-292; WALLIS, W. D., "An Introduction to Anthropology," pp. 416-431; STARR, F., "Some First Steps in Human Progress," pp. 145-179; TYLOR, E. B., "Early History of Mankind," pp. 14-88.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. GORDON, K., "Æsthetics," p. 46.

Primitive men, like civilized men, have feeling states of an æsthetic nature that must be expressed, even though the forms of expression may not be as specialized or refined as among civilized men. Various conditions of primitive social life force these æsthetic expressional impulses to take more or less fixed and standard forms. When and under what conditions this institutionalization begins to take place is, of course, unknown. Similarly, in their primitive forms the arts are so interwoven that the matter of investigating their several origins is most complicated. Only the later branching processes are fairly clear. But there is every evidence that the art impulses of very primitive peoples are already more or less standardized in their expression.

These art institutions have served an indispensable function in the maintenance and development of primitive societies. The best argument in substantiation of this is offered by Grosse when he says:

. . . if the energy which man devotes to æsthetic creation and enjoyments were lost in the earnest and essential tasks of life, if art were indeed only idle play, then natural selection should have long ago rejected the peoples which wasted their force in so purposeless a way, in favor of other peoples of practical talents; and art could not possibly have been developed so highly and richly as it has been.<sup>1</sup>

Art among savages, far from being a mere pastime or ministering to supposed æsthetic sensibilities, is really a practical necessity, if not of life, at any rate of racial development and progress.

The evolution of primitive æsthetic institutions is replete with examples of differentiation. Among civilized peoples, each art has its own sphere—a sphere that is special, distinctive, and inalienable—though, to be sure, each borrows from the rest and is enriched by its alliances. But in earliest, primitive times there was no such distinction; groups of art institutions had one general domain; the particular institution did not spring into existence fully

<sup>1</sup> GROSSE, E., "The Beginnings of Art," p. 312.

developed. The specialized modes of expression evolved slowly into their independent branches. For example, music, dancing, acting, and poetry were originally combined, none of them existing in the form which characterizes them at present. Only by degrees and quite slowly did the art of tones and rhythm detach itself and develop into music; steps, gambols, and gestures form themselves into dances; words, rhythmically uttered became poetry; and several individuals introduced, each speaking for himself with appropriate gesture, develop into the drama. It would seem, also, that the graphic and plastic arts were originally in an amorphous condition, but the process of differentiation is not clear.

Art institutions, like all other institutions, show the influence of conditioning factors.

The pre-historic cave-dweller could but scratch images of the beasts of the chase upon the bones which he himself had gnawed clean. The early Chaldean was forced to build with mud and to invent and perfect the art of the potter . . . In the valley of the Nile in the days of the Pharaohs, nature and circumstance combined to force the Egyptians to sculpture in granite and build for the ages; and the granite reacted upon the sculptor, chastening his style and solemnizing his ideal . . . The Greeks had purest marble.<sup>1</sup>

Materials and the other major conditions of life have always had their effects upon the kind and amount of art.

Primitive æsthetic institutions, being transmissible in more unchangeable form than many other institutions, enable one to interpret the life of primitive peoples. From the days of the Paleolithic cave dweller, we can begin to appreciate through his art man's frame of mind, his interests, his major avocations, his other institutions. Art institutions are especially significant in that they enable us to interpret the ideals of a people, for every ideal worthy of the name seems to manage to get itself enshrined in some art form that will endure. Great art always represents the best in a people or a generation. Further-

<sup>1</sup> CONWAY, W. M., "The Dawn of Art," p. 7.

more, the great ideas and ideals, the great movements and achievements, are commemorated, and thus given enduring record, in art forms. Conversely, when a people's ideals are low, its art is coarse and vulgar; beauty surrenders to the sensational and gross; good taste yields to the flamboyant and the bizarre.

Primitive æsthetic institutions are everywhere also bound up with other institutions in the daily life of the people. The festivals—family, communal, tribal—involve almost all the art forms known to primitives. The festival, being a great expression of feeling, and often being commemorative in its nature, utilized the constructor and decorator, the graphic and plastic artist, the musician and dancer, to bring before the people fully the significance of the event. Dancing was bound up with many private undertakings, such as love making, and most community affairs such as warfare, the hunt, the religious ceremony. Similarly, music, the drama, poetry, painting, sculpture have ever been called upon to enhance the efficacy of other institutions. Thus, we have in them also special conveyers of knowledge concerning other primitive institutions.<sup>1</sup>

#### 10. PRIMITIVE MORAL STANDARDS

Morality is not absent from the life of the lower races. In fact, when an intimate insight into their life is gained, morality in some form is found everywhere, and the principles of conduct cover almost every action, and are insistently maintained. This is well attested by original observers in many parts of the world. Without a code of morals, the very existence of the rudest tribes would be impossible,<sup>2</sup> for the code contains standards of right and wrong which are the basis of order among the members of

<sup>1</sup> On primitive æsthetic institutions in general see HIRN, Y., "Origin of Art"; GROSSE, E., "The Beginnings of Art"; GORDON, K., "Æsthetics"; WALLASCHEK, R., "Primitive Music."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. TYLOR, E. B., "Primitive Culture," Vol. 2, p. 360; WESTERMARCK, E., "The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas," Vol. 1, pp. 742ff.

the tribe. Hence, every tribe has its set of moral institutions, the requirements of which are well defined and offer no possibility of hesitation. The "good" man almost everywhere keeps his promise to his fellow tribesmen; is not lazy in group affairs; does not steal from his fellows; does not murder one of them, especially if they are young and fit, and thus reduce the strength of his tribe or precipitate a blood feud. He has, in fact, a great number of taboos or prohibitions of a social as well as of a religious nature, that his society lays down, that he must observe or suffer—taboos that prevent actions which are believed to be harmful to health, industry, war, sex, family, or any other social interest.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, there will be the greatest variation among tribes regarding the rightness or wrongness of a great array of acts, especially such as cannibalism, female infanticide, killing the aged and infirm, unchastity before marriage, and cruelty.

Among most primitives, the standards apply only to relationships within the tribe. The forbidden act committed against the fellow tribesman may bring the severest punishment; but if committed against a member of another group may bring commendation; in fact, may be a moral act. Hence, the members of a neighboring tribe may have to suffer theft, slaughter, and slavery, especially if they are probable enemies, though, it is often true, that moral codes concerning hospitality, honesty, and regard for human life are sufficiently elastic to embrace powerful foes who are capable of retaliation.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the particular set of somewhat institutionalized moral principles usually exists only within the particular tribe; they are local and special, and vary directly with groups. As is the case among civilized groups, they are a matter of a particular culture and environment, depending on the type of life the people have to live.

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 1107.

<sup>2</sup> HAMBLY, W. D., "Origins of Education Among Primitive Peoples," p. 407.



But always the ethical institutions are that selected residue of the experience and reflection of the particular group in connection with the problem of mutual adaptation and adjustment; and they exist in properly standardized and sometimes in organized forms, and are enforced. They provide for the fulfilling of those mutual duties which must be performed in the interests of an orderly and stable group.<sup>1</sup>

## 11. PRIMITIVE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Since religion is, among primitive men, as among civilized men, the agency of adjustment to the supernatural environment and the unknown, inexplicable, and uncontrollable in the immediate environment, it is a highly complex and diverse thing, probably more so than any other primitive institution, since it must provide adjustment to the most special and particular unknowns. In conformity with the purpose of this chapter, and extensive description of even its most common and universal forms among primitives would be inappropriate, and little can be definitely said without doing this. All that can be properly said is that primitive religion wherever it is found is an institution; that is, it serves what are felt to be basic needs; it is standardized and more or less organized; it is accepted and enforced by the great mass of the group; and it usually has a special personnel for administering it. Everywhere it is in evolution; as the particular peoples change, it drops some elements and adds others in serving its functions. Everywhere it is not merely a relatively fixed means of carrying on specifically religious functions for the group, but, being supported by irrefutable supernatural power, it is also used to enforce various other institutions, such as

<sup>1</sup> See also WESTERMARCK, E., "The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas," 2 vols.; SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 1095-1132; ELLWOOD, C. A., "Cultural Evolution," pp. 216-224; HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Morals in Evolution," Vol. 2, Chaps. III-VII, 1906; SUMNER, W. G., "Folkways," Chap. XV; WALLIS, W. D., "An Introduction to Anthropology," Chap. XXVI; MARETT, R. R., "Anthropology," pp. 235-241; TOZZER, A. M., "Social Origins and Social Continuities," pp. 230-241.

the primitive economic and industrial institutions; the political institutions, especially in the form of divinely aided and approved chiefs or leaders; primitive jurisprudence, which often rests entirely upon Divine intervention and control; primitive education, which consists largely of learning religious beliefs and magical formulæ; and primitive ethics and ceremonial. Everywhere it is a powerful disciplinary organization, especially in enforcing a great array of taboos.<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER VI

### INSTITUTIONS IN EVOLUTION

Any institution of consequence is a product of history. It has antecedents of some kind reaching back through the ages. Hence, to understand institutions, one must know something of their evolution.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to touch on certain aspects of their development. No attempt will be made to offer a great mass of concrete cases or to compile the history of any set of institutions, but rather to abstract from anthropological and other culture studies certain legitimate conclusions regarding their antiquity, antecedents, developmental uniformities, and differences, to gain an understanding of the outstanding operative forces, and to examine the combinations of factors responsible for institutional traits.

#### 1. THE ANTIQUITY OF MOST INSTITUTIONS

All cultures, even the most primitive or those among a people that have just achieved an identity of their own, are historic growths in which the vast majority of cultural elements, as they are discernible at any given time, come from the past as part of a cumulative process. This past is so remote that, in most cases, all origins are lost. This is especially true of social institutions. Most, though not all, of the important ones are under way, in one form or another, when the first acquaintance is made with prehistoric and primitive peoples. The facts concerning their origins, therefore, are a matter of conjecture, since the evidences of social organization in the period of their origin have not been preserved for us in the way that material

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 5; TODD, A. J., "The Primitive Family as an Educational Agency," preface.

culture remains are available for the geologist and the archeologist. Origins of institutions, even among contemporary primitive peoples, are remote and obscure. This is simply another way of saying that almost every institution that goes deeply into human life has a long and involved career; it is ancient and even prehistoric.<sup>1</sup> We are inclined to think of some particular institution as distinctively modern, only, to our embarrassment, to discover it in the most remote antiquity. Hobhouse states that: ". . . we find archaic achievements which make us wonder whether after all there is anything new under the sun."<sup>2</sup>

This enormous antiquity of institutions seems to illuminate the fact that social life from its origin is bound up with social institutions, and that its continuity manifests itself most markedly from the beginning in the continuity of social institutions.

Obvious, also, is the fact that institutions are the products of a long course of development, and they serve their purpose only because they have had, from earliest times, a considerable degree of efficacy in performing their appropriate functions. All existing institutions are, to a greater or lesser extent, the fruit of the experience of the race through successive ages brought to bear on the life of today. Candor also forces one to admit, however, that for this very reason they tend to contain within their present form and functioning a large element of primitive content which, in a measure, accounts for their occasional imperfect operation.

As has been implied, however, not all institutions go back into antiquity nor are all found among primitives. Occasionally, among a given people or in a given culture, social changes occur so rapidly, due to some stupendous

<sup>1</sup> HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Social Development," p. 303; HETHERINGTON, J. H. W., and J. H. MUIRHEAD, "Social Purpose," p. 125; BARNES, H. E., "Recent Developments in the Social Sciences," p. 350; MORET, A., and G. DAVY, "From Tribe to Empire," p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303.

and more or less sudden impetus, that new needs of a vital nature spring up that must be met at once and without the benefit of precedent or any particularly useful previous social experience. Many of the recreational, play, and health institutions, as well as some of our institutions for ordering the political and economic life of modern concentrated populations, may be mentioned as illustrations.

## 2. THE ANTECEDENT STAGES OF AN INSTITUTION

The basic need did not spring full blown into an institution. Every institution is the product of a sequence of processes, each producing its social form; it is, in fact, a chain of sequences, an evolutionary series. The analysis of these antecedent forms of institutions and the process whereby they are transformed from one stage into the next, until institutional status is finally achieved, is the contribution of William Graham Sumner.<sup>1</sup>

*Need* was everywhere the first experience and the first impelling force, if men were to live. In response to need, came the first clumsy and blundering and often unpremeditated efforts; pain, discomfort, chaos had to be avoided. The needs, if persistent, recurrent, and permanent, resulted in ways, sometimes accidentally hit upon by the group, however small, of satisfying them. It is possible that these ways were not noticed until they had long existed, and it was still longer before they were appreciated. These primitive ways of living, not always altogether devoid of a degree of reflection, if efficacious, were frequently repeated and then became group habits or *folkways*; that is, they were selected ways of doing socially necessary things expediently; were established by experience, produced a sort of equilibrium; answered the purpose better than any other ways of doing things; and, hence, were approved and transmitted from generation to generation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Folkways," pp. 2-3, 30, 35, 49, 53-55, 76-77; SUMNER and KELLER, "The Science of Society," pp. 5, 29, 43, 88-89.

<sup>2</sup> On the part of the taboo as an instrument of selection among folkways see SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1108; Vol. 3, p. 1568.

When folkways worked more or less well they were continued for many centuries, were coordinated to a degree, became more and more arbitrary, positive, and imperative, were generally accepted by the group as indispensable, though there was not always a definite justification, were enforced by the group, and acquired a momentum that would carry them through generations and centuries. Then they were *customs*, the basic elements in all repeated social actions—"pervasive and irreducible features of life."

Out of the more or less unconscious experiment which every repetition of ways includes, there grew convictions that many of the ways were directly conducive to societal welfare. And:

. . . when this conviction as to the relation to welfare is added to the folkways they are converted into *mores*, and, by virtue of the philosophical and ethical element added to them they win utility and importance.<sup>1</sup>

They become pattern ideas regarding social relationships and express generally approved social values that are approved by conscious and deliberate action and are insistently maintained. The members of the group come to believe that their ways are the only right ones, and that departure from them invites calamity. Settled folkways and customs surrounding a vital need or dominant interest are always taking on the welfare element, thus becoming *mores*.<sup>2</sup>

When the more or less well-formulated and defined *mores* are "lifted out of the atmosphere of sentiment and faith" into the realm of the conscious and deliberate and are made more definite and specific as regards the rules, codes,

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER, *op. cit.*, p. 3. There is now a tendency to make *mores* and *customs* synonymous terms. In the writer's opinion Sumner's distinction is valuable and his terms describe characteristic culture patterns. Hence the inclusion here.

<sup>2</sup> Note the definition of SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 34: ". . . they are the popular habits and traditions, when they include a judgment that they are conducive to societal welfare, and when they exert a coercion on the individual to conform to them, although they are not coordinated by any authority."

prescribed acts, and the apparatus or agencies to be employed; when they are given a framework, and a more rational, practical, utilitarian and positive character is added; in brief, when they are systematized and "instituted" they become *institutions*.<sup>1</sup> In other words, when interests, ideas, sentiments and beliefs, in the form of folkways, customs, conventions, rights, and mores, appear in more coherent and rational form, as precipitated types of social procedure or more or less definitely organized structures for regulating the intercourse between the members of social groups, they become institutions.<sup>2</sup> In every society, however simple, a time comes when the important and necessary functions are thus institutionalized.

Thus, when an institution is established, it is usually merely expressing in some organized way a social principle which has long been in operation in one of the antecedent forms. The process of making an institution, in the main, goes on gradually. Furthermore, the student of institutions must be warned against believing that there are any sharply marked lines of demarcation between the antecedent stages outlined above. They are zones of transition, merely, and each slowly shades into the next by almost imperceptible gradations.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. THE PLAY OF THE AUTOMATIC AND THE RATIONAL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INSTITUTIONS

Hobhouse states, "For the most part institutions . . . are not made, but grow."<sup>4</sup> The history of institutions

<sup>1</sup> "Property, marriage, and religion are the most primary institutions. They began in folkways. They became customs. They developed into mores by the addition of some philosophy of welfare, however crude. Then they were made more definite and specific as regards the rules, the prescribed acts, and the apparatus to be employed. This produced a structure and the apparatus to be employed. This produced a structure and the institution was complete." SUMNER, *op. cit.*, p. 54. See also RIVERS, W. H. R., "Social Organization," p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. TODD, A. J., "Theories of Social Progress," p. 325

<sup>3</sup> Cf. SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 695, 1096-1097, 1421.

<sup>4</sup> "Social Development," p. 304.



shows this to be true, in general. As we have just noted, institutions start with a mass of scrambling and groping tentatives—primitive reactions in simple and rudimentary forms, often at first blindly performed—that bring certain favorable results. These become sets of regular and traditional procedures, and are the raw material of institutions in the form of folkways or customs. These reactions or their products, subjected to the processes of selection and survival, become stabilized and crystallized; take on social sanctions, and even compulsions, as they come into play in social circumstances; come to be systematized and more or less definitely administered; and thus become institutionalized. Thus institutions would seem to be the result of automatic processes working themselves out in regular evolutionary form.

Franz Oppenheimer<sup>1</sup> has gathered facts to show that social institutions have actually, in many instances, at least, come into existence abruptly by a mutation, rather than by a process of evolutionary selection and the gradual accumulation of relatively slight variations.

Sumner, however, distinguishes between the *crescive*, or spontaneously developing institutions and the enacted institutions which are products of rational invention and intention. These latter belong to high civilizations. They come when men, guided by rational reflection and experience, deliberately systematize and regulate the usages which have become current along certain lines; or actually, by planning and experiment, so modify them or add to them as to create *telicly* positive institutions. This simply points to the fact that not all institutions are immediately preceded by a corresponding uninstituted custom. One can hardly say, for example, that political institutions such as a bicameral parliament, or a system of proportional representation or the city-manager plan of municipal government arise directly out of precedent

<sup>1</sup> "The State: Its History and Development Viewed Sociologically."  
Translation by JOHN M. GITTERMAN.

custom.<sup>1</sup> But pure enacted institutions, which are strong and prosperous, are hard to find. They cannot be created for a purpose out of nothing. All institutions to be effective as such, must directly or indirectly come out of the mores, though the rational element is sometimes so great as to obscure the growth from the primitive antecedents.<sup>2</sup> But, as civilization develops, the social institutions are moulded more and more by human thought and telic effort and less by automatic and experiential adjustment. Yet the custom base is always in evidence.<sup>3</sup> Some institutions simply have more of conscious direction and construction in them than others.

In general, one seems to be safe in contending that the development of institutions is a complex combination of factors, consisting in its rudimentary stages of spontaneous and automatic adjustment presided over by a sort of blind selection and the survival of the fittest elements; later a matter of accumulated experience in the form of trial and error, experiment and knowledge; and, finally, in the higher stages, the result of deliberate creation by a reasoning and consciously acting élite, government, or populace.

#### 4. THE SIMILARITY OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FIELDS AT ALL STAGES OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND AMONG ALL PEOPLES

Modern anthropology shows that primitive peoples the world over have come to possess in some form every basic institution of civilized society,<sup>4</sup> or at least institutions that would fall in practically all of the basic fields. The evi-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. MACIVER, R. M., "Community," pp. 154-155, 158.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. SUMNER, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>3</sup> "The main characteristic of the deliberate creation of institutions is probably that many people—in democratic societies, presumably the majority—act together, and ordain that which seems fitting to them. But it is evident that such action itself bases on an institution that is ultimately of "customary" origin." BENTLY, A. F., "Investigation in the Social Sciences," *Ann. Am. Acad. Political and Social Sci.*, Vol. 5, p. 935. See also DEALBY, J. Q., "Sociology, Its Development and Application," p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. TOZZER, A. M., "Social Origins and Social Continuities," p. 239.

dences, though inadequate, of the social life of the later prehistoric peoples, especially the Crômagnons and the Neolithic races, point to the same conclusions. Tozzetti<sup>1</sup> calls attention to the obvious fact that in the case of the institutions of primitives there is no reason to believe that these in their forms are the result of the precept, example, or imitation of the so-called "higher cultures," because these higher cultures are, in fact, derived from the more primitive. Nor are there reasons for thinking that these similar institutional fields are the result of a common growth, for they appear in all times and regions, and in all culture stages. The reason for this uniformity must rest upon other grounds.

The universal uniformities must be attributed to the common-human and the common-social. Goldenweiser<sup>2</sup> summarizes the reasons under three heads: first, the general psychic unity of mankind; second, the identity of the primary needs of human and social life; and, third the general similarity of the physical conditions available for their satisfaction. In other words, since human beings are similarly constituted with respect to organic wants and drives, and since they have a general psychological similarity, the human needs have been much the same. Similarly, human beings in the mass, regardless of race or station or era, are not highly diverse. Furthermore, since successful human groupings occur only when certain rather definite types of social relationship and cooperation exist, the basic essentials of social organization are likely to be fairly uniform among human groups everywhere and at all times. Every community or group in its organization must provide for the ordered satisfaction of fundamental wants, for social order through internal arrangements governing the relations of the various parts, for certain authority and the agencies for exercising it. In general, these types of needs have to be satisfied by methods that

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> "Early Civilization," p. 302.

have to fall within certain rather well-defined limits. Finally, the materials, physical and social, for the satisfaction of these needs, while not identical, are, in the main, of such a nature that they are utilized in the same general way. As Sumner and Keller state:

. . . both men and their life-conditions are pretty much alike, there is a general similarity between the expedients adopted for the realization of interests in all places and times. They have a family likeness. They all reflect the inveterate conditions of life on earth.<sup>1</sup>

The general types of elemental individual and social needs, as they play through societal evolution, force certain general methods of satisfying them.<sup>2</sup> These needs, of necessity, must be provided by general groups of institutions and their attendant associations and organizations. As one would expect, in communities the most nearly primitive of any now existing, this social constitution is of the most elementary kind, but it does contain practically all the major fields of institutions. Everywhere, there are basic economic institutions making possible production, exchange, and satisfactory consumption, domestic and matrimonial institutions, religious institutions with a diversity of forms, all the institutions essential to social and political organization, certain artistic, educational, and communicative institutions.<sup>3</sup> There is a homogeneity of all cultures and civilizations with reference to the principal constituent elements. The differences are those of development and degree, rather than of kind.

##### 5. THE GREAT DIVERSITY OF THE CONCRETE INSTITUTIONAL FORMS

At the same time, any survey of the specific institutions of either primitive or civilized men in any particular field shows the greatest diversity of actual forms. They are

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> See also WALLIS, W. D., "Similarities in Culture," *Am. Anthropol.*, Vol. 19 (January, March, 1917) pp. 41-54.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. GOLDENWEISER, A. A., *op. cit.*, p. 400.

exceedingly irregular and variable, presenting almost all degrees and types as they are examined among a large number of peoples. There are few exact parallels. As we have noted in the previous chapter, the situation among each people calls forth a unique means of meeting the basic and more or less unchanging needs. The institutions of a given people at a given time are found to have many special forms, qualities, parts, and other characteristics that the similar institutions of another people will not show. The divergencies of these institutional forms are seen, often obviously, and always upon reflection, to be due to local circumstances.<sup>1</sup> There may, in fact, be aberrant institutions among some people that are mere local "sports;"<sup>2</sup> others are local spontaneous growths or individual creations in effect for a time.

The differences among the institutional forms in a given field are especially great among primitive peoples, the types being practically as numerous as there are separate societies. This is particularly due to the fact that primitive groups are isolated. They do not have the constant intercommunication and contact so characteristic of modern civilized society. The result is that local institutions are peculiar, much more individual, and specialized.<sup>3</sup> Under such conditions widespread uniformities are not so likely to develop; the dictates of the local situation are more likely to predominate. This same state of affairs exists also to an extent among isolated peoples of more advanced culture.

All the traits of the institutions of a given people are, however, the result of a peculiar combination of factors that have affected their culture, and that cannot be exactly duplicated elsewhere. Even the contacts affect each people differently. Thus, for example, while almost all peoples have ethical codes, the ethical code of any given people is unique as to content and spirit; and the same holds

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> LANG, A., "Social Origins," p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> GOLDENWEISER, A. A., *op. cit.*, p. 117.

true, to a degree, at least, of practically all other institutional forms. In the main, the concrete institutional forms have to be as manifold as the special needs of local group cooperation and order. Hence "instead of dull uniformity there is mottled diversity." But what are the various factors responsible for the unique combinations of traits found in the institutions of a given people at a given time?

#### 6. THE ACQUISITION OF TRAITS BY INSTITUTIONS DURING THEIR DEVELOPMENT

In the course of the evolutionary processes, the institutions take on various characteristics. These are acquired in a variety of ways, and numerous forces and factors are involved. The bulk of the characteristics can be accounted for, as has been alluded to above, on the grounds that most institutions are adjustments to the special local conditions. Their characteristics reflect, first the conditions imposed by the physical environment, for this constitutes the arena in which the institutions operate and establishes the conditions to which most of the major adjustments of life must be made; and the materials upon the basis of which the life of the group depends and which determine physical well being. The important phases of the physical environment that leave their impress on the institutions are the climate, geographical position, topography, quality of the soil, the fauna, flora, and raw materials.<sup>1</sup>

Of equal importance are the racial makeup and the social history of the people, particularly the culture contacts they have made, population density and composition, the nature and influence of surrounding groups, and all the consequent social conditions requiring regulatory agencies. In brief, many of the characteristics are indigenous features, the result of intimate adaptation to the mental and social constitution and the environment of the possessors of the

<sup>1</sup> The subject of the various environments in their relation to institutions is so important that the entire next chapter will be devoted to it.

institutions.<sup>1</sup> But the sources of the traits may not necessarily have been local, though the adapted culture patterns always are. In fact, in the majority of the cases, the traits are probably borrowed. This subject of the acquisition of traits requires closer examination.

All culture traits are, of course, a matter of discovery (unpremeditated finding) or invention (purposeful discovery) somewhere and by somebody, and institutional traits are no exception. The adjustment problem was a challenge to tribal genius and elicited solutions. While these solutions oftentimes came by accident or trial and error, some of them were the result of deliberate though crude and cumbersome experimentation by the best and most inventive minds of the group. In these inventive processes, failures as well as successes led to continually new adjustment features. Since invention has been so important, all institutions, therefore, owe most of their features to individual contrivance and planning. These invented traits are in continuous process of achievement in the history of institutions; they come as successive steps and by small mutations. As a rule, so many people participate in the invention process that the individuals are anonymous. Occasionally, though, the inventive contribution of a particular individual looms so large in a trait or even an entire institution that it will carry his label for generations.<sup>2</sup>

But invention does not explain all the combinations of traits of the institutions found among the various peoples of the earth. If it did, the peculiar genius of the individual inventors applied to the more or less unique local situations would have produced a much greater array of diverse institutional forms than really exist. Actually, there is much resemblance between the institutional forms of

<sup>1</sup> For illustrations see MUKERJEE, R., "Principles of Comparative Economics," Vol. 1, pp. 70-77. The interpretations given in this work may be questioned, however.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sec. 2, Chap. X.

different peoples. This statement is in no sense contradictory to the thought of the preceding section. There is no absolute similarity, for each group must make their own peculiar and appropriate adjustments to their own unique combinations of needs. Furthermore, even where traits are copied they cannot be copied *in toto* and without some variation due to lack of a complete understanding of them. Hence, the diversity of the concrete forms as discussed above. And yet there is great resemblance of traits among the institutional forms of many peoples, even striking resemblance in some details that demands some explanation. In explaining this resemblance much light will be thrown on heretofore unmentioned processes that affect the acquisition of traits of institutions. The perennial problem among students of culture is to explain the resemblances between all the various culture traits of widely separated peoples, as well as those of the particular culture complexes, the social institutions, that we are concerned with.

This problem has led to at least three schools, each of which have their peculiar explanations of the phenomena. There are, first, the Diffusionists, who hold that culture traits have been discovered or invented, but once, and all other examples have been derived from this one by means of borrowing or diffusion. Then there is the Parallel or Independent Invention and Evolution school, which maintains that each people invent their own forms, and that "similarity is due to chance and the basic unity of the human mind, which confronted with similar conditions, has reacted to them in a similar way." Then there is the Convergent Evolution group, who maintain that the similar culture trait complexes may have started with very different inventions among different people, but in the course of their evolution gradually converged in their nature, so that what had started out as two or more unlike traits finally came to have close superficial resemblance. Now much is to be said for each of these. and an abundance



of examples are available to sustain each, but there is no unilateral explanation that will account for all the resemblances among institutional traits. Only an eclectic, or perhaps rather a synthetic, explanation will suffice. All of these methods of acquisition are operating at once, and are probably supplying traits, though not in the same degree, for any given institution.

Certainly institutional traits are as often borrowed or acquired by imitation through contact, as by local development; in fact, in the case of the great majority of institutions, a far greater proportion of the traits are so acquired rather than by immediate discovery or invention. There has been much of this at all times and in all levels of culture. This borrowing or diffusion occurs through contacts of all kinds, such as intermarriage between members of different culture groups, individual or family migration, travel, trade, or war. The nature of the borrowing process also depends upon a variety of factors, as, for example, whether the contacts were peaceful or military, the relative numbers of those composing the respective groups, the respective degrees of culture of the peoples, the amenability of the new institutional forms to modification for local use, the rigor of the need, the resistance offered by the local cake of custom and the conservatism of the populace, and soon. It is especially true, in general, that if one culture is recognized as higher or better it is more easily accepted; but, on the other hand, if cultural differences are very great, the very gulf existing prevents a borrowing. Among primitive peoples, particularly, small bodies of migrants have produced deep and far-reaching changes through the possession of institutional forms which seemed great and wonderful to those among whom they settled.<sup>1</sup> Warfare frequently has led to such borrowings and fusions through the cross-fertilization of cultures which it produced. Out of it has come a testing of competing institutions and customs tending toward a selection of those with the best

<sup>1</sup> Cf. RIVERS, W. H. R., "Psychology and Ethnology," pp. 299ff.

traits, an enrichment of cultures, and an improvement of institutional forms, as well as the addition of some heretofore undeveloped among one of the peoples. Later, when groups spatially remote from each other are able to communicate by mutually intelligible forms of writing, or the other means of communication based on writing, the possibilities of cultural interfusion, selection, and mutual enrichment are interminably augmented.

Only the most detailed knowledge of the entire life histories of the particular similar forms among two or more peoples will determine which or what combination of these causal factors were at work. At best, though, when an institutional trait is very ancient and of practically world-wide occurrence, it is exceedingly difficult to estimate between diffusion and independent invention. Even the independent developments are sure to be more or less intertwined with disseminations. Every particular institutional form may be partly borrowed and partly modified or further developed by original effort.<sup>1</sup> In conclusion, about all one can say is that institutional traits are partly a matter of discovery, partly a matter of special invention, or rather a series of inventions to meet the unique needs of the local physical and social environment, and partly due to additions of borrowed institutional forms that are more or less modified as they are adopted locally.<sup>2</sup>

## 7. INSTITUTIONS ARE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

The peoples of the world are in various stages of cultural development. At one end of the scale are the most advanced societies with all the resources of civilization,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. KROEBER, H. L., "Anthropology," p. 220.

<sup>2</sup> On the subject of this section as a whole see DIXON, R. B., "The Building of Cultures," pp. 33, 182, 183, 303-305; KROEBER, A. L., "Anthropology," pp. 216-240; WISSELER, C., "The American Indian," pp. 376-377; WISSELER, C., "Man and Culture," pp. 99-100; RIVERS, W. H. R., *op. cit.*, p. 141; PERRY, W. J., "The Growth of Civilization," p. 2; FRAZER, J. G., "Balder the Beautiful," Vol. 1, p. 6ff; TYLOR, E. B., "Researches into the Early History of Mankind," p. 5; WESTERMARCK, E., "History of Human Marriage," Chap. I.

with innumerable means of overcoming time and space, with the agencies for contributing to the fullest and highest satisfactions of life, and of living a life of infinite complexity and richness. At the other end are those peoples that have the most rudimentary arts and crafts, who are the pawns of their physical environment, and who live a life most haphazard and precarious. Between these extremes range the various societies of men. Their institutions show the same range. Sumner and Keller,<sup>1</sup> calling attention to the developmental diversity in the case of given institutions, state:

The series of marriage-forms, for example, runs from the slightest of regulation through to the exclusive form called pair-marriage. The forms of government which correspond to various sets of life-conditions, over space and through time, fall likewise into a series, which begins with an informal council of elders or a vague chieftainship and winds up, thus far, with a highly organized "democracy."

The institutional forms of the higher cultures seem in the main to be the lineal descendants of the similar forms in the lower stages. E. B. Tylor<sup>2</sup> points out that:

The language of civilized men is but the language of savages, more or less improved in structure, a good deal extended in vocabulary, made more precise in the dictionary definition of words.

Also that:

The development of language between its savage and cultured stages has been made in its details, scarcely in its principle.

The same conclusion is justified by an examination of almost any other set of institutions, be they religious, economic, sexual, artistic, and so on. It would seem that modern institutions differ from their counterparts in the lower culture stages in detail and quality and efficacy rather than in principle or purpose; they are rudimentary.

Occasionally, however, in their evolution institutions lose some of their functions, which in turn are assumed by

<sup>1</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> "Primitive Culture," Vol. 2, pp. 445, 446.

new specialized institutions, or occasionally also an institution separates into parts and loses its own identity altogether. Thus the primitive group, which was at once a family organization, an economic, a political, a religious, an educational, and a moral unit, has among most higher cultures broken down and been replaced by several distinct institutions, each with its own special character. Many of the various institutions are only gradually differentiated as the needs of a people become more complex and special.

It is equally true that among a given people, regardless of their general culture stage, different institutions will be in different stages of their development. Some will have become ossified, and though monumental, will have to be admitted to be useless as far as the efficient performance of their function is concerned; others will be in their prime, vital, effective, and largely self-operative, because so generally accepted; others again will be relatively new, just emerging from the mores and custom stage, and still requiring continual aid and supervision to insure successful operation.

Finally, the fact is not to be ignored that institutions have never developed logically and harmoniously, or in proper sequence. The parts of a given institution, in many cases, have not developed contemporaneously. The evolution is invariably disjointed and jerky; different institutions or parts of institutions are out of gear with each other. Hence, the maladjustments that exist in every society.

#### 8. THE ENLIGHTENING EFFECT OF A KNOWLEDGE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF INSTITUTIONS

No one can have a complete understanding of social institutions unless he has informed himself in some detail regarding their development and history. Such a study demonstrates social institutions as living things, unconsciously and slowly created by man, having remote antecedents, conditioned by a variety of circumstances, vitalized

by his mind, frequently accidentally or even deliberately perverted by him, and performing a variety of functions, most of them necessary and justifiable, but some by no means so. It enables one to interpret the purport and significance of existing institutions. It shows institutions, or at least institutional forms, that now from some points of view seem absurd and illogical, to have once had significance and function. Similarly, it presents to the impartial and dispassionate observer many a time-honored and sacred institution as an anachronism that would bless the race by its disappearance. It shows that many of our most prominent institutions have not only been erected on primitive foundations but contain within their present-day form and expression a large admixture of primitive content. As Professor H. E. Barnes states,<sup>1</sup>

If we properly understood these facts, there would be little ground for chauvinism, cultural arrogance or conservatism. They would tend to convince us of the lack of that uniqueness, divine revelation, perfection and permanence with which we are wont to clothe and adorn our institutions.

It shows how absurdly antiquated are many of our common beliefs and attitudes toward institutions.

By means of such a developmental knowledge we may also test institutions:

. . . we may note the degree to which they are meeting the functions for which they were devised, the degree to which a given institution is superfluous or inadequate; the degree to which our respect for it rests on tradition or sentiment rather than its efficiency in meeting existing needs; the degree to which readjustments to changing conditions have occurred and the forces producing them. By means of it we may also augment our knowledge of the good or bad material, intellectual, and moral effects on life and character—in brief, on human well-being—of the institutions which have developed and under which men have lived.<sup>2</sup>

Until we know something of the development of the institutions which make civilization the complex and some-

<sup>1</sup> "Recent Developments in the Social Sciences," p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> HERTZLER, J. O., "The Sociological Uses of History," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 31, p. 191, September, 1925.

times the inconsistent thing it is, it is fatuous to think that we have any scientific understanding of the social problems of the present. Hence, the reader is urged to inform himself regarding the history of institutions, depending both upon the materials provided by the anthropologists regarding primitive peoples and those of the historians regarding the preceding centuries of our own civilization.

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## CHAPTER VII

### THE RELATION OF INSTITUTIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENTS

#### 1. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ENVIRONMENTS IN THE STUDY OF INSTITUTIONS

While men have noted correlations between human culture and environment from Hippocrates on, it is only in recent years that there has been a real, scientific appreciation of its multiple significance. This has largely come with the awareness of other highly potent environments, in addition to the physical, the real importance of which students of mankind did not and could not fully realize until the social sciences developed their analytical methods and applied them to social phenomena. The various environments are now seen to be critical factors not only in social causation and conditioning, but also in individual conditioning and development, and, hence, are of great significance in cultural evolution. As such, environments bear a very close relationship to institutions, for, as has been noted repeatedly above, by implication at least, institutions are a very important phase of a society's culture. Especially are the environments potent factors in producing institutional traits.

The chief justification of this chapter lies in the fact that it is in man's relationship, individually and collectively, to his various environments, that the needs arise which cause institutions. The environments establish various kinds of life conditions and situations to which compliant adjustment must be made if men are to live and prosper. The institutions are these adjustment agencies. Hence, the origin of institutions, their growth, and many of their

functions and characteristics rest upon environmental factors. This does not mean that the adjustments of an institutional nature made by several peoples in a given set of environments are identical, but it does mean that they must all be compatible with the major conditions established by the environments. If not, the people and their institutions perish. This applies, also, to borrowed or imported institutional forms. Furthermore, while men have shown great ingenuity in suiting their conduct to these life conditions established by the environments, these achievements have not lessened the submissiveness of men to the environment.<sup>1</sup> It is also now known that institutions themselves constitute a very important part of one of the environments, especially as this environment affects the personality and well being of individuals. The remainder of this chapter and the allied sections in other chapters will be devoted to an examination of the precise nature of the relationship of the various environments and social institutions.

## 2. THE RELATION OF THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT TO INSTITUTIONS

The most obvious environmental factor, and the one that has attracted the attention of both ancients and moderns to the greatest extent, is the physical environment. Broadly conceived, the physical environment has three outstanding phases of great significance in this study. There is, first, *climate* with its humidity and precipitation, its temperature, weather, and seasonal changes, affecting the growth of all forms of life, and especially the vigor, activity, work, temperament and movement of the human beings; second, the *topography*, including here altitude, contour, and such surface configurations as mountains, coast lines, deserts, valleys, rivers, and swamps, affecting the movement or isolation, the contact and communication, the defense, trade, and degree and kind of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. SUMNER and KELLER, "The Science of Society," p. 3.



man's culture; third, *resources*, in the form of quality of soil, fauna, flora, and minerals and metals, affecting man vitally in that they supply him with all the physical materials of his life. Let us examine more closely the relation of this set of environmental factors to institutions.

Physical environment exerts both physical and cultural influences on man, for he is dependent upon his environment; he can no more escape it than he can avoid the forces of gravitation.<sup>1</sup> Wallis states,

Since man must always live in some geographic environment and must cope with the forces of nature if he is to survive, must wring a living from the land or the sea, it is obvious that his culture is never unrelated to the physical conditions amid which he lives.<sup>2</sup>

Sumner and Keller<sup>3</sup> come to pretty much the same conclusion. They view the physical environment, especially the earth surface or land, as the arena in which the destiny of mankind has been and must be accomplished. "There is nothing surer than that men are earth-born and earth-nourished." Referring particularly to the man-land ratio and its relation to institutions, they say:

The type of society's institutions derives ultimately from the ratio of men to land. This is equivalent to saying that the type of society and of societal life goes back to that ratio; for the life of any society lies in the evolution of its institutions since they are its adjustments to its life-conditions.<sup>4</sup>

The physical environment influences the institutions in practically all of the fields. Especially are the institutions connected with the basic life needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, and transport, of even the culturally advanced groups, partially determined and in some measure limited by their environment. This is another way of saying that economic and industrial institutions are to a large extent dependent upon climate, topography, and the raw materials

<sup>1</sup> WALLIS, W. D., "An Introduction to Anthropology," p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> "The Science of Society," p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5

available. Occupation, the nature of the things produced, the forms of wealth and property, the types of power, the consumption habits, the seasons of major activity, are obviously dependent upon physical environment, and have their institutional effects. Here environmental influence is most clearly and demonstrably felt. But all institutions will show, remotely at least, some influence. The political institutions, for example, will be affected by the man-land ratio, the topography as influencing aggression and defense, and the resources. The domestic institutions, always bound up closely with economic institutions, show to a limited extent some influence of physical environment. Thus, as Westermarck points out,<sup>1</sup> many observers think that polyandry, that is, one woman married to several husbands, is due to environment. Sterile soil, or a limited amount of tillable land, in mountainous regions, combined with a general inelasticity of resources and the prevention of emigration because of isolation, has necessitated keeping the population down. This form of marriage is highly effective in doing this. In some cases, as in Thibet, where the husbands are brothers, it also has the advantage of keeping all the meagre property together and in the family. It is possible that polygyny, if widespread among a people, is, to a degree, related to abundance of resources. For in those environments where agriculture is profitable, plurality of wives will provide a supply of field laborers, whereas, in a poor hunting community, the more wives a man has the more mouths he has to feed. Certainly, the family in its various aspects takes much of its color from its particular physical environment.

Ethical institutions broadly viewed also show this influence, especially in their codes. The writer has said elsewhere,

Originally . . . ethical codes were directly concerned with the survival of the members of the group, and this process had as its dominant conditioning factor the physical environment. Ethical codes still reflect

<sup>1</sup> "The History of Human Marriage," Vol. 3, pp. 187-190.

occupations, major methods of obtaining subsistence, forms of property, types of domestic organization, and vicissitudes arising from seasons, all of which may be more or less determined by local environmental conditions; . . . they (ethical institutions) are only excellent in proportion as they are adapted to a particular environment.<sup>1</sup>

Religious institutions are also to a certain extent influenced by physical environment. Among primitives, religion was and is an attempt to explain local natural phenomena, to entreat the Deity or deities to assist processes of reproduction and growth, to assist, in general, in producing a satisfying adjustment to the inexplicable, surrounding world. Many of the religious institutional forms of civilized men, such as monotheistic beliefs, conceptions of an after life, and the creeds reflect the fundamental expedients of the life process, which are undeniably bound up intimately with the physical world. All the other institutional fields are affected: the educational, scientific, and communicative institutions must assist in the process of adjustment to the major physical conditions; the æsthetic institutions are provided with themes and materials as well as inducing or prohibitory agents; the health institutions must adjust themselves to climate, swamps, microorganisms, etc.; the recreational institutions are dependent on physical environment for most of their opportunities.

Entire culture areas are, in fact, more or less geographically determined. Wissler, for example, and after him Kroeber,<sup>2</sup> divide the culture of the primitives of the Americas into fifteen more or less independent areas, which are regional divisions, having fairly uniform geographical characteristics, and which vary according as they are coastal, plateau, tundra tract, forested area, mountain area, level or rolling plains area, arid, subarid, or semiarid area, or tropical area. These areas have a homogeneity of culture traits, though there is much evidence of diffusion

<sup>1</sup> "Social Progress," p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> WISSLER, C., "The American Indian," pp. 217-260; KROEBER, A. L., "Anthropology," pp. 335-339. See also WISSLER'S "The Relation of Nature to Man in Aboriginal America."

within the limitations established by the geography, and much diversity of concrete forms. In general, for Wissler, there is a close correlation between these natural ecological areas and culture areas.<sup>1</sup>

The relationship of physical environment to institutions is further borne out by the fact that changes in the man-land ratio or changes in the physical environment induced by man may cause a considerable change in some of the institutions of the group so affected. This is illustrated when irrigation becomes necessary. When the need arises for exploiting the water in arid regions (usually as the result of population increase) men, however individualistic and unsocial they have been, are forced to submit to that effective solidarity which the husbanding and equitable use of the water demands; their individualistic institutions must be modified in the interests of cooperative and socialized activity. In the arid and semi-arid parts of America now where irrigation has been introduced, the English common law conception of private property, which is a product of conditions where there has been an abundance of water, and where private interest could be safely depended upon to give the best results, is going through a considerable modification in the direction of restricted individual rights and emphatic social interest. Furthermore, the necessity of irrigation may even produce new institutions for control purposes.<sup>2</sup>

Similar modifications on a much more extensive scale, and affecting a much greater array of institutions, occur when the increasingly acute man-land ratio forces a transition from one economic stage to the next. At such times

<sup>1</sup> Dixon, R. B., "The Building of Cultures," p. 285 also says, ". . . each ecological area, each region possessing an environmental character of its own, begot a culture area, in part correlated with it, and comprising a larger or smaller series of individual cultures, each the product of a people's genius, but all expressive, in varying degree and sometimes in varying fashion, of that common background shared by all."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Brunhes, J., "Human Geography," pp. 533-534; Mukerjee, R., "Principles of Comparative Economics," Vol. 1, p. 245.

practically all the institutions may go through marked transformations, for, in general, each stage of economic development is accompanied by a characteristic political system, a type of domestic organization, and a form of property. For example, after a people have advanced from the pastoral to the agricultural stage they have a more settled life, a larger accumulation of capital, and a greater economic differentiation. The patriarchal family is weakened and the status of wives is degraded as they become field workers. Slavery also appears on a large scale. Political institutions change to protect the new forms of property, especially the expanding territories. The territorial state and its special subinstitutions come into existence. Monarchy replaces the chieftainship and other tribal forms. A marked modification of military institutions takes place, usually resulting in a special military class. Many of the forms of property change, usually in the direction of an increase in private property, especially private property in land. The settled life also leads to the modification of many other old institutions and the addition of new ones. The stupendous institutional changes wrought by the Industrial Revolution are also, in part, illustrations of the principles here discussed.

Similarly, a migrating people usually feel the effects of a new physical environment as they try to transplant their institutions developed under one set of environmental conditions to the new soil. Thus Dixon<sup>1</sup> mentions the Yakuts, a pastoral people, long inhabitants of the Asiatic steppes who are trying with great difficulty and no prospect of permanent success to maintain their pastoral institutions after migrating inside the Arctic circle, where only hunting is suitable.

The quality of the institutions of a given people also depends in a measure upon the physical environment. There is a greater likelihood of flexible and efficient institutions—institutions that are revised as the need requires—

<sup>1</sup> "The Building of Cultures," p. 15.

among an alert and dynamic people. And such a people, it is thought, are much more likely to exist where the climate is stimulating and the possibilities of contact, communication, and cross-fertilization of ideals, experience, and culture are great, making selection of the best possible. There is now pretty general agreement that a stimulating climate is one which has frequent weather changes; fairly marked annual and diurnal variations in temperature; a reasonable amount of cold during at least part of the year; a refreshing variety of sunshine and cloudiness, and sufficient rainfall to provide adequate moisture. An accessible people are not isolated by impassable rivers, swamps, mountains, or deserts, and their institutions do not tend to become rigid and stagnant and inefficient. They are subjected to varied streams of diffusion.

In general, one is justified in stating also that social institutions are only excellent in proportion as they are adapted to a particular environment. Certainly, also, institutions that would survive must demonstrate their capacity to aid the people embracing them in a successful adjustment to the environment.

In the foregoing, there is no intention of conveying the notion that physical environment explains culture, or that it directly causes social institutions, or that a given physical environment guarantees a given type of institutions or necessarily imposes definite traits upon institutions. It is not a compulsory force nor an absolute determiner, nor is it the sole arbiter of the character of institutions. But it is a powerful factor nevertheless and must be considered by all who would understand or analyze the nature of institutions. Its specific significance lies in the fact that it sets the limits within which life must be lived and establishes the unavoidable physical conditions to which adjustment must be made. Dixon<sup>1</sup> summarizes the matter well when he points out that the physical environment has played a large and very important part in the origin and

<sup>1</sup> "The Building of Cultures," p. 284.

development of culture in that it supplied the material bases upon which every culture had to draw, and that by supplying certain factors and refusing others, it offered to every people a series of opportunities which they might or might not use, and, finally, that it set up certain limitations beyond which the culture of a people practically could not advance. But man does the choosing and constructing of means and agencies within the limits set. The physical environment has a permissive character and offers opportunities which may or may not be accepted. Except in a limited number of special cases, nature can impose upon man nothing more than alternatives—though the choice *must be made* among these alternatives. If these alternatives did not exist, then a given environment would produce only institutions having identical characteristics. Actually, however, a given environmental area may have several sets, and somewhat different environments may support similar cultures.<sup>1</sup> Thus, for example, in the American Southwest, the Apache, Navaho, Pueblo, and Hopi Indians all occupy approximately the same region and are subject to practically identical environmental conditions. Yet they show the most marked diversity in their special institutional forms. The Apache and Navahos are nomadic and semi-nomadic; the Pueblos and Hopi have a culture with sedentary agriculture, pottery, and textile making. The same situation exists in South Africa, where the Bushmen are essentially hunters and seed collectors, while the Hottentots are eminently pastoral people.<sup>2</sup> In both of these cases, the force of physical environment has not been strong enough to bring about a single complex of institutions, though each people have a combination that is fairly appropriate. Man does the relating of adjusting agencies to environment. In other words, the environment alone cannot account for cultural phenomena, though the cultural elements cannot override "

<sup>1</sup> WALLIS, W. D., "An Introduction to Anthropology," p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. LOWIE, R. H., "Culture and Ethnology," pp. 50-53, 62.

geographical factors. As Wissler would put it, the environment furnishes the brick and mortar for institutions, but not the architect's plan. The environment usually permits more than a single adjustment to the same conditions; there is always a range of choice as regards materials and construction.

The actual institutional forms, while established within the limits set by the physical environment, are a matter of the state of knowledge and technology and advancement of the group; in short, of historical and cultural influences.<sup>1</sup> Thus different groups coming to live in generally similar environments may, with similar needs, hit upon similar means of satisfying them; but it is just as likely that, since their cultural backgrounds are different, they will make different adjustments. Furthermore, different peoples in a culture area have chosen but a few of the possibilities of the geographic environment and have specialized in them, leaving many other resources untouched.<sup>2</sup> It is also a fact that the culture in an adjoining area may be diffused and much modify the institutions of a given area. It is possible, also, that a wholly new culture will be transplanted to an environment and, with certain modifications, work fairly well. Thus when the white men, especially the Americans, came to coastal Alaska, they brought with them their institutions, modified them somewhat, and added some of the native institutions. The adjustment they made thereby was perhaps as good as that of the native Indians and Eskimos with their indigenous culture, but the forms were quite different.

Economic pressure is also a very important factor in determining what kind of institutional adjustment will be made to what might be considered major environmental features. Thus, for example, a well-indented coastline tends, it is said, to develop a seafaring life, and, to be sure, there are examples in abundance. But this usually occurs

<sup>1</sup> Cf. KROEBER, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> WISSLER, "The American Indian," p. 372.



only if economic pressure—the man-land ratio—forces it. In Tasmania, where such a coastline exists, the natives were virtually destitute of any form of craft. The English did not become a significant seafaring people until the time of Elizabeth, and Japan not until fifty years or so ago.<sup>1</sup>

One is, perhaps, also justified in qualifying the environmental hypothesis by pointing out that the environment exerts a relatively more powerful influence on the institutions that are involved in the material phases of life than those that are concerned with non-material culture. Lower cultures, it is thought, also show environmental influence more directly than do the higher cultures, although what appears so obvious may be illusory in fact. It may be that the influence is just as great upon higher cultures, only human ingenuity has erected more buffers between environment and the daily life of the people, and discoveries and inventions have both complicated and diffused the effects so that they are not so readily distinguishable.

In general conclusion, we feel justified in stating that the physical environment is a potent factor in the development of the characteristics of institutions, especially in certain fields, provides many of the materials, and sets certain limits, and, hence, must be reckoned with at all times; but the ingenuity, the cultural background, cultural status, and culture contacts of the given people determine the particular institutional elements and characteristics whereby adjustment is made to the particular physical environment.

### 3. THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

Social institutions are equally important as agencies enabling man to adjust himself to his fellow men, for men have to get along with their like as well as with nature. We are in continual contact with other men as competing human beings, as members of the other sex, and as psychic

<sup>1</sup> Cf. DIXON, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

entities. In each case, the adjustments must be made in an organized or institutional way. Equally significant is the effect, both on individuals and institutions, of that other more abstract phase of the social environment, the cultural or psycho-social environment, often referred to as the social heritage. These social environments merit some further consideration.

From the earliest times men have had to form adjustments in some organized way to that part of their environment which consisted of other men. Out of these contacts with other men in general have grown some of the most significant groups of institutions. Within the group order had to be maintained; the members of the group had to be protected against the members of other groups. This led to political institutions, including the military institutions. Everyday contacts had to be made smooth, and some had to be approved and others disapproved. This led to etiquette and ethical institutions. In this environment of other beings were also members of the other sex to which individuals were drawn by instinct and interest. In making such adjustments in a socially acceptable way, the matrimonial and domestic institutions appeared. Men also made psychic contacts with their fellows out of which have grown the communicative, æsthetic, educational, scientific, and, to an extent, the religious, institutions. It can be said that other men as a part of the environment of the individual have caused most of the institutions. This has all been dealt with before in one connection or another in this treatise and needs no further elaboration. Bernard<sup>1</sup> refers to other phases of the social environment: the physico-social, in the form of physical inventions of all kinds, and the bio-social, consisting of all domesticated plants and animals, the effect of both of which upon certain institutions are obvious, especially in their functioning.

<sup>1</sup> BERNARD, L. L., "A Classification of Environments," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 31, pp. 322-326, November, 1925.

The close relationship between institutions and the social environment is apparent in a most marked way when the social environment is subjected to cataclysmic changes, either because of great disturbances of physical nature, such as famine or excessively large crops, an epidemic, earthquake, flood, or fire, to which the social environments must readily adapt themselves, or due to stupendous changes within itself, and largely growing out of its institutional arrangements, such as war, any of the various kinds of revolution, migration, or some great invention. Such changes inevitably destroy some institutions altogether, greatly modify many others, and rarely leave any entirely unaffected. Particularly significant as illustration are the institutional changes that occurred in France after the Revolution, and those now going on in Russia. Mention also need only be made of the fact that the recent World War caused such a readjustment of all institutions everywhere as to throw some people into actual chaos, and cause problems for all nations that will not be satisfactorily solved in a century. Nor is it necessary to elaborate upon the institutional rehabilitation among immigrants in the United States as well as the countries from which they came in large numbers, or the changes in various institutions necessitated by electricity in its innumerable uses.

What needs to be more specifically emphasized in this section, however, is that institutions themselves are a part, perhaps the major part of the psycho-social environment or social heritage. This particular social environment is a variable complex composed of innumerable elements, past and present. It consists of all the psychic products of the associated activities of men, such as the traditions, the myths and folk tales, the superstitions, the various beliefs, all the knowledge, all the crystallized experience, all printed matter; in fact, all carriers of social ideas, values, standards, usages, and habits. Especially important in it are the institutionalized phases of social life, such as the

economic, political, domestic, æsthetic, religious, ethical, scientific, and educational institutions in all their various forms. It includes, in brief, all those multitudinous psychic processes that cause mental stimulation, and which function as control objects in the organization and direction of the thought and activity of associated human beings.<sup>1</sup> Now, while the psycho-social environment is not limited to the institutions, they constitute the larger part of it, and are by all odds the best organized and most permanent forms, and many of the other elements are either partially embodied in institutions or are dependent upon institutions to make them effective in the life of groups.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the dominant effects of institutions already discussed.

Not only do institutions serve as general social environment for mankind as a whole, but particular institutions act as environmental factors of special significance for the development of other institutions. In fact, a whole succession of institutions may await the appearance of a single one. Thus after language came into existence as an institution, it had such transcendent importance that it not only served as the indispensable element in the formation of a vast number of institutions, but out of it directly grew writing, literature, education, and all the derived communicative institutions. Similarly, a considerable number of economic, educational, domestic, health, and religious institutions are impossible until certain political institutions appear to produce a conducive social environment. Not only are institutions interdependent, but they are bound together in sequences of development. The most important effect of social institutions as environment is the way in which they shape the individual. This subject is discussed at some length in the first section of Chap. X. Mention must also be made of the fact that it is the social heritage by means of which social institutions are trans-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Social Progress," pp. 302-303.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. BERNARD, "Environment as a Social Factor," *Pub. Am. Sociological Soc.*, Vol. 16, p. 107, 1921.

mitted to future generations. This subject is treated in Chap. IX.

#### 4 THE SUPERNATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Sumner and Keller<sup>1</sup> have called attention to another environment that has called into being a whole block of most important institutions, the religious. This is the imaginary or supernatural environment, consisting for the primitives and many moderns of a world of ghosts and spirits. Everywhere the apprehension of this environment is vivid in the extreme; everywhere it is felt that adjustment to this set of immaterial life conditions is imperative, that well being not only now, but forever, depends upon it. While not tangible like the surroundings of nature and fellow men, or understandable like the psycho-social environment, it is as real and for most people far more important.

Nor is the awareness of the reality of this environment a vagary of the primitive mind. The most intelligent and enlightened men of the most advanced cultures have been and are aware of a world of unknowns and inexplicables beyond the natural and social, a world of aleatory elements, of a supernatural power or powers—a cause of causes—incomprehensible, and imperceptible through the ordinary sense channels. To this element of the human *milieu* some sort of adjustment has always been made, usually in institutional form.<sup>2</sup> All the various systems of belief, worship, magic, and taboo are functional phases, all the shamans, medicine men, priests, and clergymen are the personnel, and the altars, sacred places, temples and churches are physical extensions of the religious institutions that seek to establish this essential adjustment.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 91, and all of Vol. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. IV, Sec. 4.

## 5. A SUMMARY OF THE FACTORS PRODUCING INSTITUTIONAL TRAITS

It seems desirable to close these two chapters with a summary of the general factors that cause institutions to acquire their peculiar traits. (1) The very fact of association with other human beings in various relationships gives various institutions their peculiar primary forms and traits, for regularization of human relationships is their primary task. (2) Practically all institutions, in some degree, show the influence of the physical environment. The regional conditions impress upon them a distinct stamp or pattern, which accounts in part for their great diversity. While the specific institutional traits in particular physical and social environments cannot be predicted, there is a general linkage. (3) The traits so developed are the result of invention, of human ingenuity applied to the solution of problems of relationship in given environments. (4) As the result of all kinds of contacts due to a variety of causes, peoples borrow entire institutions as well as certain traits from other peoples and incorporate them in their own culture. (5) These inventions and borrowings are subjected to a variety of selective forces, physical and social, continuously at work, which discard many institutional forms and traits in time, alter others in detail, and stabilize and preserve still others. Always though the traits that are retained at first have some element of merit about them. (6) What the given people invent, what they borrow, and, in part, what is selected are the result in a measure of psychical factors, such as their hereditary and racial dispositions and qualities, and partly the result of their social history—the major conditions of their life, the outstanding events and crises of their career as a group, and their traditions and habits, some of which have come down from remote antiquity and some of which have been transported from place to place. This combination of factors at work in a given place and among a given people is responsible for the unique traits of this people's institu-

tions at this time. In the past their operation has been largely automatic and unplanned, though some deliberate action was occasionally involved.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### THE RELATION OF INSTITUTIONS TO SOCIAL VALUES AND SOCIAL ENDS

Institutions, being such important phases of the life of groups, are most intimately bound up with the values of groups. Through the institutions play great life values; they are in turn the causes of many values and the guarantors of other values; and, finally, they are themselves the objects of valuation. This chapter is devoted to a brief discussion of these reciprocal relations between institutions and values.

#### 1. THE SANCTION AND AUTHORITY OF INSTITUTIONS: THE RESULT OF SOCIAL VALUATION

Wherein lies the authority which gives the institution wide currency and enforcing power? Giddings says that institutions are "consciously permitted or established by adequate and rightful authority, that is, in the last resort, by sovereignty." On the same page he states more explicitly that institutions are:

Those forms of organization, those relations, and arrangements which the social mind in its public capacity has reflected upon, which it has accepted, and which *through the organs of the state it has allowed or commanded—and those only*—are institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Elsewhere he states:

Any social organization or relation that has grown up unperceived by the public becomes an institution when the attention of the state is called to it, and *the state then permits it to exist, thereby authorizing it*<sup>2</sup>

Thus authority and sanction come, in the last analysis, from the state. It will be granted that certain institutions,

<sup>1</sup> "Inductive Sociology," p. 184. Italics mine.

<sup>2</sup> "Descriptive and Historical Sociology," p. 431. Italics mine.



as for example, the family, marriage, education, and property, can only be effective when their authority comes to be that of society in its corporate form. It is also true that most institutions eventually and properly receive the sanction of law and sovereignty, and it is true that some institutions are a public activity, governmentally sanctioned and maintained. But this certainly is not true, except by the most roundabout reasoning, of some very important institutions. Language, for example, is quite apart from government, and it is usually an accident that the boundaries of a particular language coincide with political boundaries; and making a language an official language is only a political expedient and not a matter of public well being. Religion, especially in its specific institutional forms, is more and more withdrawing from the sanction and authority of the state. In fact, its adherents are alert in keeping it free from all control by or alliance with sovereignty. Æsthetic institutions in only occasional cases in history have received governmental sanction, and today whatever cognizance government takes is, in the main, in the form of establishing ethical minima for publicly displayed art.

When an evolutionary view is taken, it is seen that institutions arise and flourish independently of government. Hear Professor Hayes:

When we study the origin of institutions in the light of the practices of savage and barbarous peoples, it does not appear that religion, the family, or the institutions of property owed their institutional character to governmental action; certainly government itself did not. It appears that the institutions had independent origin and were institutions by virtue of judgments enacted by the public mind and not by legislators or rulers.

Again he says:

Apparently the institutions of a people have their rise independently of government, and their power to survive without the aid of government: the relation between government and the other institutions of a people is merely one of correlation such as must exist between the domi-

nant factors in one system of social order . . . A public activity becomes an institution by virtue of psychic elements contained within the institutional activity itself, and not by virtue of any external power or influence political or otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

Any study of the enforcement of primitive institutions shows that while some of them, in the opinion of the group members, have a supernatural sanction which causes them to be maintained and enforced through fear of the unknown, most of them operate because of other factors. Nor are there any grounds for believing that the reasons offered by the older anthropologists, as for example, "an automatic submission," "mental inertia," or "the chains of immemorial custom," are very effective or, for that matter, always existent. Moreover, there are many institutions which among modern peoples have the sanction and authority of the state, that among primitive peoples do not have such sanction because there is no state. Powerful social forces that produce conformity apart from any definite machinery, are at work among primitives and these are not essentially different in other culture stages.

The institution is a way of living which has been developed and continually approved by the group. In the selective process which has produced it, it has come to be based on certain interests, feelings, and ideas of the group. These justify it and support it, and tend to make obedience to it desirable. Certain activity goes with these interests, feelings, and ideas which is approved. Most groups, knowing that all wish social approval, make their approval and disapproval definite and distinct by various forms of praise or blame. Hence, there is public opinion behind the institution. Any deviation from the prevailing institutional requirements makes one feel and look, in the eyes of others, ridiculous, clumsy, and uncouth, or brands him as an outlaw or a "poor sport." Forces of loyalty and devotion are at work. Doing what others do or what others

<sup>1</sup> HAYES, E. C., "Introduction to the Study of Sociology," pp. 407-408.

approve of are other factors.<sup>1</sup> Finally, practically all primitive and modern groups have definite punishments which are visited upon the violators of the institutional codes. He who is not susceptible to, or who deliberately violates, the code meets force or other summary action.

The sanction of institutions rests mainly in the group as a whole, the general acceptance and approval of the relation and concept as a group activity, and its enforcement through perceptible public will. It receives governmental sanction—and that always as a supplement to the general group sanction—only when it comes to be very important to national prosperity or survival and needs widespread support, especially financial support, and definite administration and enforcement; when it is of such importance that ignorant or contrary minorities need to be whipped into line, or when some strategically situated group wants to use the institution for manipulative or exploitive purposes.

It need not be implied, however, that group sanction means approval of and support by every individual in the group. It is necessary only that the mass have the idea of this activity together with a rational judgment of its utility.<sup>2</sup> An effective minority may be the only actively supporting group, and if the remainder are sufficiently divided or more or less disinterested, this minority may succeed in giving the institution currency. If the majority does not give its disapproval, the institution may still have general sanction, even though it does not have wide practice, as, for example, the polyandrous family life of Thibet, which is not generally practiced now, but not opposed. Usually though the institution needs the backing of a decided majority to be effectively maintained.

The question still remains, however, as to why groups everywhere give their sanction to their institutions. Why

<sup>1</sup> Cf. MALINOWSKI, B., "Crime and Custom in Savage Society," pp. 9ff., 51-52.

<sup>2</sup> HAYES, *op. cit.*, p. 408.

do they have feelings and ideas supporting them? Why do they give them the authority of majority backing and, in many cases, enhance their power by putting behind them the supporting and enforcing might of the state, the group's most potent agent in social affairs and chief maintainer of necessary structures and functions? The answer is that this sanction and authority grows out of the valuations placed upon institutions by the groups embracing them; they are valued because of their practical utility, which is recognized by reason and testified to by experience. The institutions are the embodiments of great social values—values regarding the various relationships of life, values centering around order along various lines, valued social inheritances and culture residues, values that have to do with well being, systematized life, and group and individual prosperity. Concretely, they have to do with such supreme and vital social values as economic adequacy, domestic peace and socially good homes, progressive preparation for life, sexual security, mutual understanding and communication, culture perpetuation, æsthetic appreciation, health, security amidst the unknown and inexplicable, and group order and security. Consciously or unconsciously, any understanding of the rôle and significance of institutions forces one to appreciation of the great social values that lie behind these and inhere in them. If institutions do not have these values, or certain imagined existant values, behind them they cease to exist, become mere paper projects, artifacts that perform no real function.

## 2. THE PART OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE FORMATION OF CERTAIN CLASSES OF SOCIAL VALUES

Not only do institutions embody great values which determine their group sanction and authority, but, being highly influential factors in the life of their respective groups, cause certain types of values. Professor Cooley has rendered a valuable service in calling attention to the

close relationship between many of the current values of a people and their institutions.<sup>1</sup> Many values can be explained only as a product of the same social forces which create other significant social products such as traditions, customs, beliefs, ideals, etc. An institution, or anything which lives and grows and affects human life, gives rise to a special system of values having reference to the growth. Of course not all the values can be attributed entirely to institutions. Some grow out of elemental human nature and consist of valuations bound up with primary and universal needs, such as gustatory, or auditory, or sexual values. But most of the values of human groups cannot practically be explained from the standpoint of general human nature; they are rather the outgrowth of a complex institutional history through which it is difficult to trace the threads which connect them with the permanent needs of human nature. Institutional values are that part of the process of valuation whose explanations must be sought in those special tendencies of institutional life which often depart widely from the simple workings of human nature. As examples, Professor Cooley calls attention to the many values connected with dress, many of our foods, furniture, our amusements; values connected with our systems of education, our churches, our political institutions; the values which we place upon some occupational or professional men such as lawyers, stockbrokers, promoters, men of science, advertising men, and the like, in which the human nature value elements are so remote as to be intangible. Here it is clear that the explanation is institutional, and is not to be reached without a study of the organic growth and interaction of various social forms. These institutional values have social antecedents that cannot be understood except as the outcome of a special institu-

<sup>1</sup> COOLEY, C. H., "Valuation as a Social Process," *Psychological Bull.* IX, pp. 441-450, Dec. 15, 1912; "The Institutional Character of Pecuniary Valuation." *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 18, pp. 543-555, January, 1913; "Social Process," pp. 283-348. The content of this section is taken in its entirety from these references.

tional development. The institutional values greatly and increasingly preponderate over the human nature values in our social system.

The institution as it becomes established fixes its values in the minds of its adherents and these determine their wants and their choices. There are thus special values for every sort of institutional development—legal values, political values, military values, university values, family values, art values, pecuniary and economic values, recreational values, etc.

Most of these values go back to special conditions and special phases of the development of the institutions. Thus pecuniary values draw their character from the comparatively recent growth of industry and business, including also the growth of consumption. Church or denominational values can invariably be traced to particular occurrences in the history of those institutions or institutional associations. Domestic values grow out of the peculiar history of the family among a given people.

What this amounts to is that the values which an individual considers good or of supreme significance are usually the result of the institutions with which he is in most vital or most frequent contact; institutions which, for various reasons, touch him and affect him the most. He is continually surrounded by institutions; they form his ideas, dictate the values which he upholds.

To fail to heed the significance of institutions in the formation of values is to have a complete misapprehension of processes whereby values are formed. Cooley similarly states:

It seems probable that the more we consider, in the light of an organic view of society, the practice of discussing values apart from their institutional antecedents, the more sterile, except for somewhat technical purposes, this practice will appear.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Institutional Character of Pecuniary Valuation," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 18, p. 550, January, 1913

It must be admitted, however, that this fact has only recently come to be realized; some of the sociologists have recognized it for some time, and recently a group of economists have made it the basis of their thinking.<sup>1</sup>

Not only are the institutions the cause of many social values but they have their own tests or appraisals of values that are in accordance with their organic needs.<sup>2</sup> It is also noteworthy that institutional valuation is nearly always the function of a special class, and not of the whole people concerned with the institution acting homogeneously. In any given group, social power is concentrated about the functions of the outstanding institutions, and these in turn are controlled by the powerful class and used for their individual and class advantage and aggrandizement. Consequently, many of the values are originated by them with such ulterior motives in view.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. INSTITUTIONS AS THE BASIS OF FREEDOM, SCIENCES, ART, RELIGION AND ETHICS

Institutions not only create values, but, in turn, are the basis and guarantee of great values. Institutions are the only means by which positive freedom in action can be secured,<sup>4</sup> the only means whereby order and stability can be maintained, and this in spite of the fact that they, in their decadent or perverted forms, occasionally result in the direct opposite of freedom and opportunity. They contribute to and enhance some of the greatest values of a people, such as the scientific values, the artistic and cultural

<sup>1</sup> See CLARK, J. B., "Recent Developments in the Social Sciences," pp. 271-277; EDIE, L. D., "Some Positive Contributions of the Institutional Concept," *Quarterly J. of Econ.*, Vol. 41, pp. 405-440, May, 1927; HAMILTON, W. H., "An Institutional Approach to Economic Theory," *Am. Econ. Assoc. Proc.*, Vol. 9, pp. 309-318, March, 1919; ANDERSON, Jr., B. M., "Social Value" and "The Value of Money"; VEBLEN, T., "The Theory of the Leisure class."

<sup>2</sup> See COOLEY, *ibid.*, p. 449; "Social Process," pp. 291-292.

<sup>3</sup> "Institutional Character of Pecuniary Valuation," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 18, pp. 550-555; "Social Process," pp. 302-308.

<sup>4</sup> DEWEY, J., "Human Nature and Conduct," p. 166.

values, the religious and ethical values. Professor Giddings' discussion of the contribution of institutions along the lines here discussed cannot be improved upon, nor can it be omitted in such a discussion as this:

All experience has shown that it is only in institutional life that the needful combination of stability, continuity, and liberty is secured. In human history there has been no other political liberty than constitutional liberty. There has been no individual freedom but under government and law. Moreover, it is not easy to see how, apart from institutions, the continuity of what is best in tradition—the common law, art, and science—could have been maintained for many generations in the larger societies. Indeed, historically, it has been only after functional association has become institutional that there has been a sufficient continuity and variety of experience to create positive science, fine art, and ethics. Only after liberal institutions have been established for the purpose of comparing the experiences, the beliefs, the knowledge, and the practice of different societies, can science grow into a critical and positive philosophy; can religion develop from tribal worship into a deep and reverent consciousness of the transcendent relations of personality; or can ethics grow out of morals, or fine art out of the arts of recreation.<sup>1</sup>

Institutions are the indispensable condition for carrying any worthwhile individual or social aims, aspirations, or movements to a happy conclusion. But a certain quality of institution is equally essential, for mismanaged, stupid, and rigid institutions are the foes of freedom and beauty and spirituality.

#### 4. THE TEST OF VALUE OF INSTITUTIONS

Institutions must meet certain tests. These tests may be of at least two different types. We may scrutinize an institution first, with respect to the way it meets current values; and, second, the way it conforms to ultimate and ideal ends. In viewing institutions according to the first type of test, they may be adjudged with respect to their value to the people maintaining them. Thus, the relative value of different institutions for any given period of time

<sup>1</sup> GIDDINGS, F. H., "Principles of Sociology," p. 396.



can be explained by noting the number of persons who participate in the institution and the degree of sacrifice those persons may be prepared to make for it. This, in turn, rests upon the character and significance of the interests and needs that the institutional fulfills. It has been well said that

~~It~~ It is only when we are able to estimate the amount of strain and opposition that an institution can withstand that we are in a position to appreciate its value.<sup>1</sup>

Thus we could say that the indispensability of the institution was a workable, concrete test of its value.

If an institution rates high according to this test we should not permit other factors to influence us against it or in favor of it. Thus, we must not judge an institution harshly in the present because of its origin, which may have been abominable and base according to our present ideas. On the other hand, while some institutions have had an admirable and noble origin they may now be very poor, mere shells or actually stultifying or perverting influences due to their decayed condition or the manner in which they are manipulated. Present excellence rests upon the qualities the institutions now have and exhibit in their functioning.<sup>2</sup>

But when objectively considered, institutions must be appraisable according to some social-value scale, and this scale must rest upon a conception of an ultimate social end that meets the general approval of those competent to establish such a value or complex of values.

Institutions, like all else, must take their proper place in the general scheme of things and must contribute to fundamental life ends. If they do not, they are reduced to an anarchy of uncertainty, are working at cross-purposes, may contribute to chaos, and no estimate of their proper

<sup>1</sup> MUKERJEE, R., and N. N. SEN-GUPTA, "Introduction to Social Psychology," p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 267-268.

functioning can be fixed.<sup>1</sup>) But what is the fundamental end of institutions or any other social agency? Certainly careful reasoning does not permit constantly better social machines and processes to be posited as ends, nor does it accept merely more efficient institutions, nor improved controls of physical, biological, and social forces, nor any superior environmental situation. These must logically be labelled merely as efficient and necessary means to the real end. The real and final end is the production of human beings, personalities, men of full stature.<sup>2</sup> The fact that society with all its parts, processes, and products is essential to man does not make society greater than he, for society grows out of the individual, his needs and attributes. Its importance, it has been said, is only *his* importance under another name. Human beings are the highest thing in the world—the acme of evolutionary processes; they are the originators and bases of all achievement and progress. They are the last, irreducible elements of reality.

The concern of those who are contributing to basic ends of life is with the fulfillment of self, the maximum realization of the various individual potentialities in a socially acceptable way, the harmonious exercise of human faculties and powers, the ability to realize in part the never stilled urges, longings, strivings and aspirations that all men are heir to. This is living; it is life at its best; and, as far as our human experience goes, the one thing that seems to have inherent and, therefore, a sort of absolute value is life. All other values are derivative from this. Hence, our good as men lies in exercising the powers of living in their highest form in an attempt to achieve and enjoy relative fullness of life.

Institutions, therefore, are not good in themselves, nor can they be considered as ends however much their devotees and beneficiaries may object to this point of view. In the light of social evolution, nothing is right or valuable in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. WIGMORE, *et al.*, "Rational Basis of Legal Institutions," Vol. 9.

<sup>2</sup> See the author's, "Social Progress," pp. 88-95.

itself; nothing possesses intrinsic validity. Institutions are mechanisms of society, organs of social life, expedient means.<sup>1</sup> They are good or bad according to their social effects. The final test of the efficacy and value of social institutions is the degree in which they serve life, and the extent to which they render possible the full realization of personality.<sup>2</sup> Institutions, or any other part of the social order, are but means of making the lives of individual men more worth living. The institution is good if it does its share in establishing a world of order which gives the individual the certainty of regular functioning, of a more or less secure and safe life, of standard relationships, and which safeguards him against social strains, and sets him free for the fulfillment of himself. Each phase of social organization is to be judged by its effect upon the persons subjected to its influence.

Whether the institution be economic or political, whether it primarily affect individual or communal life, whether it have or lack an obvious physical basis, its justification must be sought in the service rendered to those who live under it.<sup>3</sup>

The good of the institutions must be the good of the whole, or else it acts in an anti-social manner and impairs the coherence of society as a whole. Each institution's immediate and special end must be conformable with general social ends.

The value of institutions depends upon the degree in which they provide a rich and stimulating individual existence, the way they encourage self-expression, and the manner in which they conserve individual contributions to the culture of the group that foster the fullest possible

<sup>1</sup> Cf. MACIVER, C. M., "Community," p. 162; HOBHOUSE, L. T., "The Elementary Social Justice," p. 3; WOLFE, A. B., "Conservatism, Radicalism and Scientific Method," p. 261; CROZIER, J. B., "Civilization and Progress," p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. MACDOUGALL, R., "The Social Basis of Individuality," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 18, p. 18, July, 1912.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

development of personality. They arise out of the needs of human life, are necessary to human life, and only have full value when they contribute to human living at its best.

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## CHAPTER IX

### THE TRANSMISSION OF INSTITUTIONS

#### 1. THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSMITTING INSTITUTIONS

In all societies, the institutions, along with all the other valuable elements constituting the social heritage, are transmitted from generation to generation and from members to strangers coming into the group to live. The well being and survival of the group imperatively demands this, especially in the case of the young;<sup>1</sup> it is a social necessity. The institutions particularly, as we have noted above, embody the quintessentials of what the group has learned by costly trial and error experience and what it has developed by invention in meeting the various outstanding individual and social needs growing out of contacts with nature and out of social relationships that had to be cooperatively met; they are precious culture accumulations, the selected and standardized ways of successful living—the “rules of the game”—uniform among the members of the group. Order, peace, and prosperity only come when all in the group live according to the same principles and methods of order; and if this is to continue, all newcomers must be given these materials for order and advance.

If any single generation failed, for some cause, to pass down to the next this accumulated experience of the past—or rather if any generation failed to initiate the rising generation into the body of inherited lore before passing off the scene—civilization would be lost.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, ever since there have been fairly cohesive groups the responsible members have seen to it that the young were

<sup>1</sup> Cf. PARK, R. E. and E. W. BURGESS, “Introduction to the Science of Society,” p. 161; HETHERINGTON and MUIRHEAD, “Social Purpose,” p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> PETERS, C. C., “Foundations of Educational Sociology,” p. 23.

given, in one way or another, the accumulated social wisdom and the current, standard, social practices, both to conserve these, and to assure the continuity of the group and its culture, and the well being of succeeding generations. These processes of transmission grow increasingly important and difficult as civilization advances and becomes more complex and the gap between the initiated adult and the uninitiated child becomes necessarily wider.

When mention is made of the transmission of institutions one is really referring to the various processes whereby the institutional content—the underlying concepts and beliefs, principles and values, codes, standard relationships, and methods—is passed on to the next generation; the ways the next generation is “conditioned” so as to accept these and conform to them, and make them fixed attitudinal and behavior sets. Concretely, it refers to the ways in which the standardized and generally approved lore and practices regarding religion, economic life, sex and family life, civic and political life, morals, and æsthetic and cultural life, and so on, are given to the next generation.

It need not be emphasized that in any process involving the transmission of culture elements, the communicative institutions are not only themselves passed on, but are the indispensable agents in the transmission of all the other culture elements.

## 2. THE INFORMAL MEANS OF TRANSMITTING INSTITUTIONS

In all groups, institutions, and all the rest of the social heritage, for that matter, are perpetuated and transmitted by processes, some of which are more or less haphazard and informal, and which rest upon certain psychic potentialities of individuals and certain pressures unconsciously exerted by groups; while others are conscious, organized, and formal. Both of these types working together constitute the learning process, or education in the broadest sense. In this section we are discussing the informal ways.

Informal education consists of the various stimuli and pressures of the social environment bearing upon more or less plastic, suggestible, inquisitive, acquisitive, and imitative human beings, and shaping or conditioning their mental and behavior patterns. That it is tremendously effective in providing the individual with a great share of the materials necessary for living is unquestioned. That it is a potent factor in the transmission of institutions is equally unquestioned. The human young are everywhere born into families and communities having a culture. From birth on this culture is a continual pressure upon the individual; it surrounds him like an atmosphere; from it or through it come all the stimuli he receives throughout his life. These social stimuli bombard the individual especially during childhood, the years of highest receptivity and plasticity. We know that these deposits in the childhood mind persist throughout life often with but slight modification.<sup>1</sup> In fact, all through life man is at the mercy of his group culture, though he generally remains either partly or wholly unaware of what he is forced to accept.<sup>2</sup>

Especially do the life routines and standards impinge upon the individual from birth on. The child is in an environment of institutions—an environment charged with institutional stimuli conditioning him every moment of his waking time. The simple daily intercourse of children in the family and with the rest of the community causes them to participate in the social life, and confronts them at every turn with a whole wealth of standard usages. Everything they see and learn fits in directly with the life they lead day by day. Within the family a common language is spoken that they automatically acquire, certain economic acts are carried on in a certain way, a certain division of labor is observed, certain authorities are obeyed, play is stimulated and playmates are gotten along with in certain ways, certain rules of conduct and certain concep-

<sup>1</sup> GOLDENWEISER, A. A., "Early Civilization," p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

tions of right and wrong exist, a certain deity and certain observances regarding the deity affect them, etc.; every family activity, every bit of conversation are replete with suggestions regarding the institutional life of the group; and all these are within the sense range of the child and are imitated and accepted, and become fundamental phases of his life.<sup>1</sup>

When the child's circle of activity extends beyond the family, additional institutional influences bear upon him and shape his behavior. These broaden still more his institutional training, and before formal training ever begins he is well started in his acquisition of his groups institutions.<sup>2</sup> These primary groups—the family, the play groups, and neighborhood—exercise powerful informal educative pressures all through life.

In later childhood and youth the individual comes into contact with larger social groups and these give him further institutionalized experiences that leave their effects. The church, the gang, the team, the musical or art society, the club, the job, the business or occupational or professional group, the political organization, the social contacts with their sex standards, etiquette, the amusement groups, all the means of communication with the outside world, all provide underlying concepts and codes, force cooperation, and direct choices. They come to us as individuals, not through any formal instruction, but are breathed in through the social atmosphere of our native environments. In the main, we get more training in the standardized ways of living and interacting that constitute the institutional life through the informal contacts with our fellows and our environment than from formal education. Especially is this true of the great masses of men.

All of us have very little formal instruction during the first six years of our life, the most impressionable of all;

<sup>1</sup> Cf. GOLDENWEISER, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–18.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. SMITH, W. R., "The Rôle of Social Heredity in Education," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 24, p. 574, March, 1919.



even during the school years only about one-ninth of the time is spent in school; and then for most of us follow from thirty to sixty years during which almost all learning is informal, though, none the less, quite thorough and effective.<sup>1</sup> Everywhere and at all times the group approvals and disapprovals also are active factors in giving a definite set to the experiences we have had in conforming to and participating in institutional practices. And yet, because the institutional materials, so received, are unconsciously propagated, are heterogeneous, and presented in chance and unsystematic fashion, there are obvious gaps and distortions, and there is no assurance regarding the socially necessary quantity, quality, or variety of materials imparted to the next generation.

### 3. THE FORMAL MEANS OF TRANSMITTING INSTITUTIONS

Institutions are also formally transmitted by specialized institutions, such as schools, certain societies and organizations, and certain phases of other institutions which are specifically and consciously used for educative purposes, as, for example, the home and the Church. Such formal means of transmission are present in some form even among the simplest of primitive peoples. As soon as there is a fund of accumulated experience of any significance and as soon as fairly successful agencies of control have developed, men resort to more and more conscious and elaborate machinery for imparting these to the oncoming members of the group. They do not depend upon the natural tendency to imitate, nor are they satisfied actually to afford the young opportunities for imitation, or to provide just a degree of parental guidance. On the contrary, among the primitives as among the civilized, the informal means of transmission are supplemented by organized and devised agencies for systematically and compulsively making the young acquire the institutions

<sup>1</sup> PETERS, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

and other elements of the social heritage. In other words, almost all groups set up a special institution or set of institutions to conserve and transmit all the other institutions.

This came to be especially necessary in the higher stages of culture, when, due to the increased size of the groups, and the consequent accentuation of social problems, the institutions became so numerous and complex and important that the irregular and uncertain informal agencies simply could not be depended upon to give a properly extensive and sufficiently intensive instruction in institutional elements, nor could it discriminate among the various elements, select them, and present them with sufficient emphasis and the requisite skill to assure a margin of social safety. Furthermore, the social consciousness became so acute regarding social solidarity, social conservation, and social progress that special training for the young was thought to be imperative, and purely educational institutions were differentiated and generally established. Men saw the importance of directing, in a measure, their evolution, as an insurance measure, by better preparing the young of each successive generation. Consequently, as civilization advances the formal means of transmitting institutions increase in reach and power, and do this with the general consent and encouragement of the group. A discussion of the chief informal and formal agencies for transmitting institutions, found among primitives and civilized peoples follows, special emphasis being given however to the formal.

#### 4. THE TRANSMISSION OF INSTITUTIONS AMONG PRIMITIVE PEOPLES

Savage, like modern, societies, maintain themselves by passing on their culture in various ways. However crude their culture is, there are elements in it which they feel must be imparted to their children if they are to become

efficient members of adult society and if the tribe is to continue. This takes the form chiefly of transmitting institutional elements.

As among people in all stages of culture, much of the education is incidental; the institutional forms and practices are continually and unavoidably observed by the children, hence, are a matter of continual suggestion and are naturally imitated. Small boys imitate the hunting tactics of the grown-up men, play at the religious rites; small girls imitate the household, agricultural and child-caring tasks of the women, thus gaining by assimilation much accumulated social experience.

But savage peoples early realize the importance of actually giving their children specific institutional materials, and in their methods they show themselves to be surprisingly capable teachers and psychologists. The astonishing thing is that there is no known tribe of people that does not attempt to instruct their young in a more or less positive, aggressive, and systematized way. For example, using the imitative bent, many primitive peoples teach necessary tasks, such as agriculture, hunting, pottery making, and weaving, by providing materials and opportunities for the children to play at the tasks. The Pueblo children, for example, learn the appearance of the tribal gods by playing with dolls representing the deities.<sup>1</sup> Morals are taught from the first by maintaining constant discipline, and general conformity to institutions is emphasized by means of stories and fables.

There are also the institutional practices which it is the particular responsibility of parents to give their children. The father is expected to instruct his sons in how to make and set traps, how to chip flints or work metal; how to make fire, hunt, throw the boomerang, make various tools and weapons, etc.; the mother teaches her daughters how to plant, gather food, dress skins, weave, make pottery, cook, care for babies, make clothing, etc. Most of the

<sup>1</sup> TOZZER, A. M., "Social Origins and Social Continuities," p. 98.

domestic and economic duties and skills, and the etiquette are thus imparted.

Recognizing also that the most economical way of insuring general conformity and well being was not to wait for an infraction of the institutional principles and customs, but to forestall difficulty by an early conditioning of the new members of the group, more or less fixed systems of instruction are quite general and provide the array of habits necessary for full participation in the group. Furthermore, many of the rites and myths are too complex to be acquired and understood through imitation alone.

The initiations rites<sup>1</sup> and the secret societies are the chief forms of formal primitive educative agencies. In all primitive societies, at puberty, the boys, and among many, the girls, are obliged to go through a rather lengthy and complicated initiation ceremony before they are recognized as being fit to assume the dignities and duties and responsibilities of men and women. The old men (and women), being the repositories of knowledge relating to the origin, growth, and function of the institutions, whether mundane or spiritual, and being versed in their practices, are the logical instructors, and do take the most prominent part, though the whole group participates. These rites consist of instruction in tribal history, the legends, sex knowledge and the rules regarding sex relations, moral precepts; the rules of the family and the respective responsibilities, methods of fishing, fighting, and house building; the rules regarding the in and the out group; the laws relating to the class system; various religious observances, rites and myths; food restrictions; the relations to neighboring tribes, property law, a variety of taboos; how to sing the songs of the tribe; in fact, all essential tribal usage. By means of secrecy and mystery, and the appeal to curiosity and wonder; by seclusion and the fear of the unknown; by hardship and tests of physical endurance; by the suppres-

<sup>1</sup> See in this connection especially WEBSTER, HUTTON, "Primitive Secret Societies," pp. 49-73.

sion of emotion and the insistence upon self-control; by the introduction of competition and rivalry to arouse pride and desire to excel, the primitive instructors indelibly impress this tribal<sup>1</sup> lore upon the initiates, and make them enthusiastic conformists. But always behind the instruction there is more than a hint of the power which can break those who fail or refuse to fall in line.<sup>1</sup>

These initiation rites are of particular interest to us because they are so clearly social undertakings. They are generally insisted upon and receive the attention and energy of the entire group. No individual has standing as an adult unless he has gone through them. Thus the group assures itself that the institutions will be perpetuated and that solidarity will be maintained.<sup>2</sup>

The various secret societies, clubs, and associations, so common among primitive peoples, are religious and regulative as well as educational agencies. While some of them function to a very small degree before the initiatory rites in instructing the young, the real influence does not come until during and after initiation. They are special instrumentalities that maintain a strict tribal discipline, afford a continuous education in the local code, and conduct many of the tribal affairs.<sup>3</sup> As the initiate advances to associations of deeper secrecy, he acquires more and more institutional lore, obtains enlarged tribal experience, along with increasing maturity, until he may in time become a member of the council of the elders and be himself a leader and instructor. It would be difficult to devise for nature men more adequate instructional agencies than the initia-

<sup>1</sup> HAMBLY, W. D., "Origins of Education among Primitive Peoples," p. 408.

<sup>2</sup> " . . . It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the initiation rites in providing among peoples destitute of all governmental authority save that of the tribal elders, a system of primitive social control which demands and receives the unquestioning obedience of every member of the community." WEBSTER, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> See WEBSTER, "Primitive Secret Societies"; SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 525-560.

tory processes and the accompanying secret societies. They represent the beginning of schooling in the strict sense of the term. The various ceremonies and practices constitute a course of instruction cumulative and progressive in its nature, established by the group chiefly for educational and regulative purposes. As a result, the individual is not only able to take care of himself successfully, but is a cooperative participant in the affairs of the group, and a depository of the group's agencies of perpetuation and well being, capable, in turn, of becoming himself a transmitter.

Being preliterate, the instruction among primitive peoples had to be carried on by oral means.

As Bernard points out:

Hence, there grew up a much greater emphasis upon the formal side of knowledge and technique than we can conceive of as necessary among us, where we trust to reference books, formulas, and libraries for the accurate preservation of important processes.<sup>1</sup>

## 5. THE TRANSMISSION OF INSTITUTIONS IN MODERN SOCIETY

The significance of the family as a transfer agency of civilization from one generation to the next is no less important in modern societies than among primitives. It is literally a psycho-social bridge between the generations whereby ideas, attitudes, customs, codes, social habits, and other important institutional elements are transmitted. But the function of the family is even more specific along these lines, for it not only transmits but gives practice in many important activities necessary to satisfy life's needs, and serves to mold many habits necessary for right social living. Thus Peters says:

In the family one enters into practically all the relationships that characterize social life in general. There are here the rudiments of division of labor and economic cooperation; legislation; courts with their arguments; weighing of merits and judicial decisions; moral inhibi-

<sup>1</sup> "Introduction to Social Psychology," p. 415.

tions and adjustments; property and property rights, superordination and subordination, etc.<sup>1</sup>

In many of its other institutional organizations society expends a great deal of energy in the deliberate promotion of social practices. Government, in a sense, by means of its laws and enforcing agencies, educates us in many necessary ways; parts of the church, such as Sunday-school classes, classes in church and biblical history, and catechetical drills prepare the next generation for religious life; business and the trades have apprenticeship training; social clubs as well as the family give training in the social amenities and ethical codes.<sup>2</sup> As Judd states:

Wherever individuals are introduced to social institutions and encouraged in cultivating social traits education is going on.<sup>3</sup>

But everywhere among modern peoples the school has gradually been developed as a means of actively imposing the institutions on the next generation.<sup>4</sup> The school is carefully devised as a specialized educative agency. Instead of carrying on the educative function in a haphazard and incidental way as do the other educational agencies, it makes it its chief function. It is manned by a specially trained personnel, and systematically organizes its training.

School differs from out-of-school life in its systematic character. Experiences do not come to the pupil in school as haphazard as they do out of school. They are selected, graded, and organized. The teacher so manipulates the environment of the pupil as to bring it about that he shall get the experiences which are most useful in preparing him for future life, and also that he shall get these in the order in which he can best profit by them. In the ideal school those experiences will be given

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 168. See also BURGESS, E. W., "The Family and the Person," *Pub. Am. Sociological Soc.*, Vol. 22, pp. 133-143, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. JUDD, C. H., "Psychology of Social Institutions," p. 333; W. R. SMITH, *op. cit.*, p. 572.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 572.

<sup>4</sup> "Our whole life is so specialized and so subject to change that there is nothing for it but special schools." COOLEY, C. H., "Social Organization," p. 386

a place which are required to prepare the pupil for any important problem of his later life. There will be no gap left, as there are when one prepares for life through unselected out-of-school experiences. Each experience, too, will be repeated often enough and only often enough, to bring the desiderated adjustment to the required degree of perfection. Again, there will be no such blind duplication as the repetitions of out-of-school life involved. Moreover, the experiences provided in school will be shaken loose from their accidents and given in their simple and essential form, while in out-of-school life the situations through which one learns are so complex, have their essential elements so covered up and obscured with accidental ones, and are so hopelessly unsystematic in their order of presentation, that learning through them is awkward and uncertain enough to be, in general, largely, abortive.<sup>1</sup>

The school is the specially devised institution to give the individual in as effective, and rapid, and economical manner as possible the full institutional equipment necessary for the various adjustments of modern social life. While it supplements and coordinates the other educational agencies, it goes farther and presents a whole array of new materials vitally essential to good living, which the other agencies cannot give or give very poorly. In fact, today, with populations as heterogeneous as they are and with the need of continually extending the areas in which given cultural uniformities must prevail, the school is recognized as the most direct and powerful factor in transmitting the institutional elements and producing the conformities necessary for individual and group well being.

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<sup>1</sup> PETERS, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.



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## CHAPTER X

### THE INSTITUTION AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Institutions and the individuals who produce and compose them and are affected by them cannot be separated except in thought. All through history there has been a continuous interrelation and interaction between the institutions and the individual. They have reacted upon each other in various socially significant ways. This has been a very important factor in social evolution. It was a recognition of this fact that led Professor Small to remark:

The social process is the incessant evolution of persons through the evolution of institutions, which evolve completer persons, who evolve completer institutions and so on beyond any limit that we can fix.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. INSTITUTIONS AS CONDITIONERS OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITY

From the standpoint of the prevailing social psychology, the individual is not a fixed entity, nor is he at birth destined to be, except in the most general way, a person of particular attitudes, habits, mannerisms, or activities. For his human nature consists of a vast superstructure built upon his biological equipment, the chief content of which is the accumulated effects of all the shaping and eliciting forces of the external and social environment. Each individual has to learn the entire modern cultural pattern from birth. His behavior patterns are socially conditioned. Hence, he varies with the type of society of which he is a member. This society is largely, from the social psychological point of view, a matter of social and cultural environment; and institutions, being the more or

<sup>1</sup> SMALL, A. W., "General Sociology," p. 552.

less organized phases of culture, are the dominating aspect of this environment. Hence, Balz is probably justified in his statement to the effect that: "A given set of institutions, the set into which an individual is born, are conditions of the life of that individual."<sup>1</sup> The individual feels, reasons, and acts according to the predetermined forms imbedded especially in institutions. For the very principles of an institution's being form a moving, psychic force upon each individual. The pressures exerted by institutions, with all their omnipresent processes, their authorities and controls, their positive stimuli and prestiges, their sanctions and energies, upon the individuals during the most formative years of childhood and youth, when they have the least defense against them, create and perpetuate sentiments, attitudes, ideas, and overt habits that endure throughout the life of the individual. But this shaping process is not confined to childhood and youth. Giddings states:

The mature man is moulded into individuality, not through deliberate exercises of mind and will, undertaken for their effects, but through the daily struggle to fulfill the duties that pertain to his position in an organized community.<sup>2</sup>

The significance of institutions, as shaping agencies is further amplified and well summarized by Giddings when he says:

The social institutions reach out and influence the individual in numerous ways. No person can altogether escape their influence . . . At birth the individual comes under the influence of the family, and throughout infancy and childhood he is controlled largely by the conditions of his home life. Every member of society is automatically the citizen of a state, and as he reaches maturity he discovers more and more contacts between himself and that social institution. The necessity of

<sup>1</sup> BALZ, A. G. A., "The Basis of Social Theory," p. 75. J. H. W. STUCKENBERG writing of institutions in the same vein says, "They establish the course which men continue to take, the method they pursue, perhaps the very thought and aims which inspire them." "Sociology," *The Science of Society*, Vol. 2, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> "Inductive Sociology," p. 276.

earning a living brings the individual in touch with private property, contract, and other of the social institutions which have grown out of the industrial needs of man. The church too, has its effect upon the individual, and thus we see that while no *one* social institution takes *all* of the individual, every member of society is influenced by a number of social institutions. In an important sense of the word, the life of the individual in society is a matter of his relations with the various social institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Thus practically all institutions are forces influencing the consciousness and behavior of all who come into contact with them. The life of the individual becomes a series of acquired adaptations to institutional realities. What seems so natural and spontaneous in mature consciousness is the product of outside influences, mainly institutional in character, and what appears to be intrinsic in human nature and therefore axiomatic and apparently unchangeable is merely a characteristic of institutions which are deep seated and function efficiently in standardizing the behavior of individuals.

The dominance of institutions is so effective and subtle that the individuals may flatter themselves that they are exercising their own sovereign wills, whereas, in reality, they are reflecting institutional fiat. They are so much conditioned by institutional stimuli that they do not realize how their thinking, their will, and their overt behavior are controlled and fabricated. Liberty for the individual can never mean emancipation from the influence of the institutions into which he was born.<sup>2</sup> It is the vast aggregate of institutions which make up civilization that has formed our personalities and fashioned our lives.

When thinking of concrete institutions the family probably takes precedence over all others in shaping the individual self because of its unparalleled opportunities for molding the sentiments, creating habits of thought, forming

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> "His (the individual's) freedom to choose is not a sovereign and imperial will, but is a state of mind conditioned by the institutional standard now prevailing." EDIE, L. D., "Some Positive Contributions of the Institutional Concept," *Quart. J. of Econ.*, Vol. 41, p. 433, May, 1927.

standards of value through which the individual orients himself on all social issues. But since all the group's institutions are part of the atmosphere in which the individual moves, they all leave their impress. School, church, state, and business establishment shape him along various lines. Mecklin calls attention especially to the unusual manner in which the institution of private property has molded the behavior and moral sentiments of the American people in innumerable ways.<sup>1</sup> Even the institutions with which the average individual does not make such frequent or such direct contacts, as the scientific and æsthetic, have this influence upon him, nevertheless, in coloring his attitudes and in developing his tastes.

Not only are individual selves largely conditioned by institutions, but, as Mecklin shows<sup>2</sup> every individual shows traces of several special institutional selves due to the influences from various institutional quarters, as for example, the self of the home, the church, the office, or the club. Each of these selves have their definite habits, attitudes, sentiments, and so on, constituting special behavior complexes. Frequently, also, these institutional selves exist in the constitution of the same individual at the same time without influencing each other noticeably.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, it is generally accepted as fact that human nature is malleable, and changes in its concrete manifestations occur with changes in social circumstances and institutions. With the same native disposition people will behave differently under different circumstances. On the same human nature, a wide variety of institutional patterns can be grafted. Similarly, the chief source of differences in the content of the behavior of individuals lies in the great variety of institutional situations impinging upon them. It also follows that by a modification of institutions, com-

<sup>1</sup> "Introduction to Social Ethics," p. 304.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup> See also HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Social Evolution and Political Theory," p. 97.

bined with a deliberate elimination of unfit institutions, human and social behavior can be improved to a considerable extent. Viewed from another angle, institutions are educational in their nature. This applies not only to the formal educational institutions such as the school and the church, but also to other institutions whose action is informal or incidental; for example, the family, state, art, property, etc. All of these provide not only necessary social lore, but settled modes of behavior, and relatively fixed forms of social evaluation so necessary for that disciplining which is the essence of education. They thus come to be a permanent factor in moulding and developing character itself.<sup>1</sup>

All that has been said above is further borne out when the effect of changing institutions upon individuals is noted. The disorganization of a given society for any reason, as, for example, the industrialization of the economic life of Poland now going on or the increase of contacts of the Polish peasant with other peoples and institutions, has a markedly unsettling effect on the life of many individuals. When the Polish peasant moves to America and suddenly and completely changes his environment the situation is still worse. The younger generation brought up here maintains American individualistic ideals, while the parents adhere to their traditional attitude of familial solidarity.<sup>2</sup> This not only disorganizes the family, but, due to the conflict of institutional ideas and habits, has certain obvious and more or less disastrous effects upon the behavior of all the individuals concerned. The disorganization of the life of the individual is especially reflected in the crimes committed by immigrants, many of which, when examined in detail and history, are found to be due to the fact that the immigrants had not yet made their adjustment

<sup>1</sup> Cf. BRYCE, J., "The Study of American History," p. 19; SUMNER and KELLER, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1480.

<sup>2</sup> THOMAS, W. I., and F. ZNANIECKI, "The Polish Peasant in Europe and America," Vol. 1, pp. 103-104, 2-volume edition.

to the multitude of unfamiliar institutions in the new world; their behavior patterns did not fit in, and they had not yet modified them so that they would. Until they have made their adjustment to the new institutions; that is, until their responses have been thoroughly reconditioned by the new institutional stimuli, their life is a chaos. A similar, perhaps an even more critical, state of affairs exists when primitives are exposed to the culture of more civilized peoples, and are confronted with institutions which they cannot comprehend.<sup>1</sup> The individual is normal in a given society because he is a fairly successful product as far as his concepts, attitudes, and overt behavior is concerned, of its more permanent institutional conditioning forces. If he is placed in a changing or different institutional *milieu* he is himself disorganized until a new adjustment is made—something which never occurs completely in the adult.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. THE INDIVIDUAL AS THE MODIFIER OF INSTITUTIONS

The individual is always cause as well as effect of the institution, as Professor Cooley points out.<sup>3</sup> For the individual, with others, participates in the wider community life, is a member of many institutions, and has many interests apart from those bound up with the particular institution. Thus he impresses his character, formed by all the social forces, upon the particular institution. There is also, as Hobhouse points out,<sup>4</sup> a broad correlation between the system of institutions and the mentality of the individuals behind the institutions; for it takes a type of mentality to establish and work them. In the last analysis, all institutions are the results of thousands of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. PITT-RIVERS, C. G. L. F., "The Clash of Cultures and the Contact of Races."

<sup>2</sup> On the general subject of this paragraph see THOMAS and ZNANIECKI, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, 1119-1129, 1729-1761, 2-volume edition.

<sup>3</sup> "Social Organization," p. 314.

<sup>4</sup> "Social Development," p. 305

minds in interrelation—the results of the efforts of individual social beings to find a successful mode of living.

The exceptional, dynamic individuals have, however, always had the most effect, and still do, for they are the most active agents in all significant social occurrences and products. They are the coordinators of thought and activity, the formers of new combinations of facts and details to take care of new situations. Especially when the exceptional men are also the leading men, and are strategically situated, or wield some social power, do they exert a great influence in shaping and directing the activities of institutions. Some institutions, such as certain religious systems and denominations, constitutions, bodies of legislation, forms of state, or scientific institutions, carry the definite impress of certain individuals.<sup>1</sup> But this must not disguise the fact that the humblest individual of any group plays his part in making its institutions what they are.

Especially is change in social institutions due to the action of certain individuals, for no social change, particularly no deliberate change, can take place without the thought and action of individuals. All social changes, especially all kinds of social inventions, “originate in individual minds and there is no other place where they can originate.”<sup>2</sup> Civilization is a matter of cumulative change, and Goldenweiser states:

The whole of civilization, if followed backwards step by step, would ultimately be found resolvable without residue, into bits of ideas in the minds of individuals.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, those most significant elements of civilization, institutions, if they could be traced back, and if the constructive additions or changes made from time to time

<sup>1</sup> Emerson once said that “an institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.”

<sup>2</sup> GOLDENWEISER A. A., “Early Civilization,” p. 15. See also HERTZLER, J. O., “Social Progress,” pp. 219-233.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.



could be distinguished these would invariably be found to be inventions of individuals. The individual is always responsible for the new, though he could not develop these without the proper background and occasion which the group provides."<sup>1</sup>

### 3. INSTITUTIONS AS FIELDS OF INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

The individual only becomes functional when part of an association or institution. The institutions, through their associations and activities, are the most important media through which the individual grows to the mastery of his own life and the attainment of his own personality. They are the stage in which the individual performs the drama of his life. For not only do they provide the order, sufficiency, and freedom essential to the social order, as we have noted above, but also the means necessary for the realization of human potentialities. In participating in the institutionalized life activities, or even in merely coming into contact with them, the individual finds the opportunities of putting his drives, his faculties, his capacities, and his powers into play in socially approved or at least socially acceptable ways. They offer opportunities for self-activity and personal growth, for doing satisfying work, and for winning the approval of his fellows.<sup>2</sup> It is through institutions that the individual develops his tendencies toward workmanship and creativeness, and acquires facility of thought. Through them and in them he, in a measure, at least, can satisfy his longings and strivings, fulfill his aspirations, and realize his purposes. They offer not only the fields for developing self, but also of contributing it to an onflowing human life, for the con-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. GOLDENWEISER, *ibid.*, p. 18: On the general subject of this section see SUMNER, W. G., "Folkways," pp. 48-49; L. L. BERNARD, "Introduction to Social Psychology," p. 86; CROZIER, J. B., "Civilization and Progress," pp. 24-26. On the influence of the gifted in keeping the institution human and plastic see ROSS, E. A., "Principles of Sociology," p. 489.

<sup>2</sup> See GIDDINGS, F. H., "Inductive Sociology," p. 276.

tribution through the institution becomes a part of civilization, which is relatively continuous and in a sense eternal. The institutions test those talents and abilities which really are necessary for the successful performance of a definite social function. Thus the schools test students for ability along various lines, for competence for special functions, for powers of leadership; the government offers tests for ability to carry responsibility, for integrity and service, for positions of leadership, for the qualities of leadership; the same is true for economic institutions, æsthetic institutions, religious institutions etc.<sup>1</sup> Apart from institutions the individual would remain a bundle of unexpressed powers and bare possibilities. The number, variety, and complexity of institutions today offers the possibility of expression for all the infinite diversities and shadings of personality elements among people, and hence makes possible an increasing richness of life generally.<sup>2</sup> Success in life, in large measure, is achieved in and through institutions. Thus Cooley remarks:

Successful business men, lawyers, politicians, clergymen, editors, and the like are such through identifying their minds, for better or worse, with the present activities and ideals of commercial and other institutions.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, the quality of personalities developed is to a considerable extent a matter of quality of institutions, that is, institutions radiating stimuli that satisfy, that elicit, that construct. As institutions develop and become more perfect in their operation, and, as life consequently becomes better organized, new common factors of power are placed at the disposal of each individual; the sphere within which each individual may exchange services, select activities, and seize opportunities is expanded.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. SOROKIN, P., "Social Mobility," p. 530.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. HETHERINGTON and MUIRHEAD, *op. cit.*, pp. 127, 130, 249. See also HOBHOUSE, "Social Development," pp. 61, 63.

<sup>3</sup> COOLEY, C. H., "Social Organization," p. 140

On the other hand, if the institution is overdeveloped and is an end in itself, the individual is overpowered and is made a means to institutional advancement and aggrandizement, and individual effort is crushed. Then insistence is upon unquestioned authority, complete credulity, pride in ancient beliefs, blind acceptance of conditions, and contempt for innovation. Such an institutional situation produces individuals who are ignorant and cringing, utterly lacking in independence and initiative; whose originaive minds have been intimidated and who are willing, nay anxious, to be led; and what is commonly termed personality is almost completely lacking. The abnormal domination of the Church in Spain is a well-known case in point.<sup>1</sup> The capacity of the institution to give scope to the personal factor generally, the extent to which it enhances the possibilities of diverse self-expression among the individuals of the group, is lost in proportion as it becomes a huge machine and an end in itself. Only high-scale institutions give great range to free individualities, and avail themselves of contributions of every social class and interest, all faiths and philosophies, and each sex and age group.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. INSTITUTIONS AS CHANNELS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND AS SELECTORS OF INDIVIDUALS FOR SOCIAL POSITION

Sorokin has rendered a valuable service in calling attention to several other significant relationships between institutions and individuals, *viz.*, the ways in which institutions serve as channels of vertical circulation of individuals, and the ways in which they test and select individuals for membership in different social strata.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. SIMONS, S. E., "Social Decadence," *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, pp. 72-77, September, 1901; Ross, E. A., "Principles of Sociology," p. 518.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. MACDOUGALL, R., "The Social Basis of Individuality," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 18, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> SOROKIN, P., "Social Mobility," pp. 164-211. This section is drawn from this source.

Various social institutions perform the function of enabling individuals to move upward or downward from social stratum to stratum. The army in time of war, for example, provides opportunity for rapid advancement of the talented strategist, the great leader, the bold man, regardless of original social status, as well as tending to reduce others. History is replete with examples. The Church, when it is growing in social standing also plays such a rôle. The schools, through the education and training provided, especially where accessible to all members, have served as "social elevators" moving the individuals of most humble origin to the higher strata. Political organizations whether nation wide or local also provide such opportunities for many. The same is true of scientific, literary, and art institutions and organizations. In these ability, regardless of the status of families, has been recognized, and ascent of such able ones in social status has followed. Similarly the institutions and organizations connected with wealth making offer unheard-of advantages and opportunities along such lines, as American experience incontestably demonstrates. Marriage often leads one of the parties into either a higher or a lower social stratum. Prehistoric, ancient, and modern societies offer illustration after illustration of these tendencies.

Furthermore, within a given social stratum social institutions serve as means of selecting individuals, according to their talents and abilities, for the rendition of the various social functions. The same institutions which function as channels of social circulation also "test and sift, select and distribute the individuals within different social strata or positions." In distinguishing among them Sorokin states:<sup>1</sup>

Some of them, as the school and family are the machinery which tests principally the *general qualities* of individuals necessary for a successful performance of a great many functions; such as their general intelligence, health, and social character. Some other institutions,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

such as many occupational organizations, are the machinery which tests the *specific quality* of individuals necessary for a successful performance of a specific function in a given occupation; the voice of a prospective singer, the oratorical talent of a prospective politician, the physical strength of a future heavyweight champion, and so forth.

In general, as far as the testing of general qualities are concerned, in stable societies family is a test of an individual's position and in many cases of life career, and even of general and specific abilities. But usually the family test and influences are retested by other institutions, such as the school. In fact, the school is the testing, selecting, and distributing agency *par excellence*; it examines, quizzes, grades, evaluates, eliminates, and promotes future citizens, and assigns, in a measure, to social position. The church similarly tends to place the individual regarding his moral and religious qualities.

Individuals are also tested by certain institutions for specific abilities. Occupations, for example, by testing individuals, definitely select those who may enter and stay in the occupation. Furthermore, within the occupation individuals are selected for advancement or degradation. Thus:

. . . institutions in their totality compose an enormously complex and inevitable machinery which controls the whole process of social testing, selection, and distribution of individuals within the social body.<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER XI

### CHANGE AND INSTITUTIONS

Next to the analysis of the nature and content of institutions, the most important task of the social thinker and observer is to appreciate fully the problems concerning the change and adaptability of institutions. That is the subject of this chapter.

#### 1. THE IMPORTANCE OF A DEGREE OF FIXITY IN INSTITUTIONS

Inasmuch as institutions are molds in which the continued life of society is cast—really the basis of the continuity and regularity of the social process—and since they minister to permanent and fundamental needs, are the great regulators of habits and relationships, the chief adjusters to environment, and the chief agencies making for the general survival of groups, they should have a degree of permanence and durability. No society could prosper, or even long endure, whose institutions were ephemeral or flabby. If they are too easily modified they are pernicious; they do not serve their proper function. Comparative rigidity of institutions gives the group greater stability than its members alone could achieve. It gives society a degree of permanence, and prevents it from being upset by each passing influence. It enables changes to come more gradually and the mind to become used to the newer conditions as the older pass away. Adequate foundations can be built for the next step. The premature appearance of revisions is prevented. And yet social prosperity demands that this fixity be not carried beyond a certain point.

## 2. THE TENDENCY OF INSTITUTIONS TO BECOME INFLEXIBLE, SURVIVALISTIC, AND DECADENT

One of the patent facts forced upon the social analyst is that institutions have the insidious tendency, for the most part unconsciously and unpremeditatedly, to become inflexible and survivalistic. It seems to be in the nature of institutions to outlive their usefulness. Few have in them any tendency toward or provision for terminating their existence when their work is done; they tend to persist for ages, even though the need they were originally intended to satisfy has disappeared and been forgotten, or has so changed as to demand wholly different adjustments. They have a sort of grewsome immortality—an immortality of the form, but not of the spirit; they tend to ossify or petrify, and become exceedingly mechanical and unchangeable in operation—even those dedicated to high purposes, such as institutions of democracy, education, and religion. At the same time these outgrown and useless institutions emphasize authority and precedent, assume the dignity and poise supposedly born of ripe experience, develop habits of casuistry, scorn innovations, are dogmatic, become enormously self-satisfied, and function paternalistically.<sup>1</sup> They also develop an inertia of their own which makes them at least passively resistant to change. Thus they tend to become bearers of social fossils—crystallized depositories of archaic attitudes, beliefs, ideas, codes, and habits.

It must not be thought that simply because an institution is old it is bad or useless or full of survivals, nor does it mean that the only good institutions are new ones. There may be institutions that are ancient, very ancient, and still efficiently serve their appropriate functions in this modern age. But this is very exceptional. In the main, institutions that have any history at all are pretty sure to show some leftovers from earlier days, “survivances,” as

<sup>1</sup> MECKLIN, J. M., “An Introduction to Social Ethics,” p. 214. See also pp. 217–224.



Tourtoulon calls them,<sup>1</sup> that is, survivals left by a society of an earlier type in a society of a later type, institutional elements that would not be just as they are if introduced today, or perhaps would not be introduced at all. They have forms that are still functioning in the interests of those bygone days, and hence are more or less ill adapted to the needs of this age; or are quite ineffective in satisfying existing needs. Their operation simply consists in going through certain time-honored but utterly useless motions. Oftentimes, these archaic institutional forms preserve not only their pristine characteristics, but also the rôle and *raison d'être* of the earlier cultural stage or social era that called them into being. Their existence at the present time is an anomaly. Hence, in their particular forms or structures many institutions have outlived their usefulness, and consequently they cease to contribute to the fundamental life ends of the moment. They are, as someone has said, like a family whose boast is an empty name, but whose glory and mission are where it should likewise be—underground. In fact, some institutional forms, though still persisting, have for so long ceased to serve any useful purpose that, in the words of Ward, they “are the exact sociological homologues of vestiges in biology and may be appropriately called social vestiges.”<sup>2</sup>

### 3. THE CAUSES OF THE INFLEXIBILITY AND SURVIVANCE OF INSTITUTIONS

Why do institutions hang on, or persist in a particular form, after they have lost their usefulness, or after they have outlived their age? This rigidity and decadence of

<sup>1</sup> DE TOURTOULON, PIERRE, “Philosophy in the Development of Law,” p. 600.

<sup>2</sup> WARD, L. F., “Pure Sociology,” p. 268-269. For discussions of effete institutional forms see POUND, R., “Social and Economic Problems of the Law,” *Ann. Am. Acad. Political and Social Science*, p. 136, pp. 1-9, March, 1928; MARTIN, G. W., “Twelve Men in a Box: A Judgment of Juries,” *Forum* Vol. 79, pp. 867-877, June, 1928; LASKI, H. S., “The American Political System,” *Harpers Magazine*, pp. 20-28, June, 1928.

institutions is due to several causes, the discussion of which follows.<sup>1</sup>

*a. Institutions are Structures.*—Structures, in order to endure, must become stable and reasonably rigid, and institutions are structures. Hence, the first thing that is done in establishing an institution is to draw up a constitution and rules of procedure, build up a lore and tradition, select guardians and officials to keep it intact, and standardize its machinery and activity. This tends to give the institution deep rootage and causes it to become highly organized and formalized. While this organization is inevitable and essential to the efficient functioning of institutions, it also easily becomes an obstacle. For organization tends to crystallization, and then readaptation is very difficult. The larger the institution the stronger this tendency toward formalism and institutionalism. This in time, however, makes for "institutional fatigue," and the institution tends to become a monumental structure without life or potency.

*b. Institutions are Products of the Past.*—As Mecklin states:

. . . it (the institution) is the result of a slow process of organizing human experience, the crystallization of ideas, beliefs, customs, and conventions.<sup>2</sup>

Thus it is essentially backward looking. Furthermore, institutions represent group habits which have come down from the past and which are, in many cases, the work of the intelligence of men in past situations, and, hence, respected. Since they are habits of the group they only change as a rule when practically the entire group is firmly convinced, usually by some humiliating experience, that they work badly. Now this influence of habit checks the desire for premature reorganization and change, and consequently causes changes in institutions to take place gradually without seriously disturbing the life or structure of

<sup>1</sup> See also Ross, E. A., "Principles of Sociology," pp. 315-319, 501-510.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 218.

society. But it also tends to overresistance to necessary change—even those changes necessary for social preservation and development—and helps to preserve institutions which have long since lost their social utility.<sup>1</sup> It also tends to test conduct and social relations by the dictates of precedent rather than by experimentation.<sup>2</sup> It means that long-standing institutions are so obsessed by the need of preserving their corporate existence at all hazards that individual variations are vigorously suppressed. Thus the people are fitted only for an antiquated level of life. Finally, in many cases, the older an institution is the more sacred and inviolate it is.<sup>3</sup>

*c. Institutions Are Control Agents.*—They are admittedly conserving agents in many cases; they include ideas regarding order and methods for successfully maintaining order and well being in the past, and hence are seen to be vital to the community. They are made as stable as possible, therefore, and are given communal sanction and status. This tends, however, to cause the survival of institutions long after they have ceased to be useful. Furthermore, such a control institution must insist upon authority, and authority easily degenerates into dogmatism and finality, and becomes a menace.<sup>4</sup>

*d. Institutions Are Autonomous and Established.*—Their autonomous nature is well put by Mecklin:

From the very nature and purpose of the institution it must assume its own inherent and enduring worth. For it is essentially autonomous; it does not look beyond itself for its justification. The very *raison d'être* of the institution lies in the fact that it sets itself in permanent opposition to the eternal flux of men and things. Its persistence there-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ELLWOOD, C. H., "Psychology of Human Society," p. 319; COLE, G. D. H., "Social Theory," pp. 194-195.

<sup>2</sup> GILLIN, J. L., *et al.*, "Social Problems," p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> WARD, L. F., "Pure Sociology," pp. 225-226.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. DEALEY, J. Q., "Sociology, Its Development and Application," pp. 498-499; COLE, *op. cit.*, p. 44; MECKLIN, *op. cit.*, p. 218. Note Professor Ross's law regarding change in control institutions, "All institutions having to do with control change reluctantly, change slowly, change tardily, and change within sooner than without." "Social Control," p. 192.

fore depends upon its claim to have isolated from the flux of immediate reality that which endures and defies change. Upon this service the institution bases its claim to the loyalty and obedience of men; to permit this to be challenged is for the institution to stultify its own existence.<sup>1</sup>

The institution must be established also and, as Lloyd points out:

Establishment assumes, or always very strongly tends to assume the self-worth, the essentially intrinsic worth of whatever it affects. Establishment isolates and exalts; it abstracts; it hypostasizes; with its first assertion it creates a distinction, more or less insidious, between some particular thing and all other things.<sup>2</sup>

*e. Institutions Come to Be in Charge of Conservative and Reactionary Administrators.*—Old men usually are in charge of institutions, and they are invariably conservative and resist change. Among the old, "even the strong minds, the highly educated men, tend to abide in their earlier judgments and to retain the emotional attitudes of their youth."<sup>3</sup> Hence, the outgrown condition, the effete thing, escapes their notice. Furthermore, untried changes, anything new and unfamiliar, are anathema. Safety, stability, routine are sought above all else.

*f. The Conservatism of Both the Dominant Classes and the Masses in General.*—Some of the institutions are administered in the interests of powerful social groups, who have prestige and authority, or they are directly dominated by them. These controlling classes have so arranged the social system that they may remain in power indefinitely. Hence, they resist the change of customs and institutions by virtue of which they hold social power by all the means of manipulation they can control, even going so far as to legalize whatever methods and policies may be to their interest.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> LLOYD, A. H., "The Institution and Some of Its Original Sins," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 13, p. 525.

<sup>3</sup> ROSS, *op. cit.*, p. 502. See also first paragraph on p. 503.

<sup>4</sup> SUMNER, W. G., "Folkways," pp. 45-46; DEALEY, *op. cit.*, p. 137; WOLFE, A. B., "Conservatism, Radicalism, and Scientific Method," p. 187.

The essential conservatism of the masses is another factor in the rigidity and decadence of institutions. This is partly an innate attitude closely bound up with self-preservation, partly a matter of tradition and habit, partly due to the slowness with which new ideas and adjustments can be diffused through a group, and, in part, due to inertia. Groups seem to be inherently opposed to change in their institutions. Change presents unknowns that, because of their uncertainty, are feared and avoided. The traditions surrounding institutions are hoary and sacred and frequently come to be a dense overgrowth which works decidedly as a conservative force. Modification would make new effort necessary to again win routine and habit, and this is irksome.<sup>1</sup> Hence, many people composing institutions detect and oppose any change or progress in those institutions. These combined conservatisms give institutions an inertia of their own that makes them at least passively resistant to change.<sup>2</sup>

*g. Some Institutions Have a Protected Position.*—They safeguard themselves against dynamic influences by invoking some sacred dogma, by manipulating the supernatural, by stressing certain ancient traditions, by hiding behind some doctrine of expediency, some generally accepted fiction, some time-honored apology, or some major human fear. Thus they survive in the social order, not because they have inherent value, but because they occupy a protected position. Such an institution, however, has ceased to live its own life, and has become unethical.

*h. The Difficulty of Seeing Institutions Objectively.*—All individuals are born into and grow up under a given set of institutions; they are conditioned by them before they are capable of discrimination, and their attitudes and ideas as well as their overt behavior are thoroughly institution-

<sup>1</sup> SUMNER, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46; HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Social Development," p. 310.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. HOBHOUSE, *ibid.*, p. 310. See also LEWELLYN, K. N., "Legal Institutions and Economics," *Am. Econ. Rev.*, pp. 79-80, December, 1925.

alized. They are so much a part of institutions, so much immersed in them, and unconsciously so much in accord with them that they do not see them objectively. The institutions are not only generally accepted as natural, but as the only conceivable response to the various group needs. Hence, the people are usually unable to examine them critically and note whether they are functioning imperfectly. For this reason, errors may persist for centuries.<sup>1</sup>

*i. Efficient Institutional Principles Are Made Precedents.* The very success of an institution may cause it to become an obstacle. As soon as it begins to be efficient, especially when it relates to matters important in the daily life of the people, the effective working principles are immediately made binding precedents. This is true among almost all peoples without exception. If a thing works, or works fairly well, hold on to it at all cost and make it a fixed rule. Among primitives, the origins of such institutions are attributed to their divinities and, hence, they are to be preserved and cherished. Some such fiction attaches itself to the institutions of moderns as well.

*j. The Institutions Engender Loyalty and Pride Which Promote Their Longevity.*—It seems to be unavoidable for people to accomplish much along any line without developing a loyalty and devotion that is almost eternal. But in establishing a specific endeavor, the minor often takes precedence over the major objectives.

Men wish to promote education. They found a college and sacrifice for it, come to love it; and because they love it, they insist upon its perpetuation even if every unprejudiced observer of the situation knows that the time has come for it to die for the advancement of education. Devotion to the ends which the institution was designed to serve has been quite overshadowed by a personal and passionate loyalty to "dear old Siwash." The Society of Jesus was founded to serve and strengthen the Roman Catholic Church in a serious crisis. It did a great work, became corrupt, was abolished by the highest authority in the Church; but it had cultivated a loyalty to itself which was stronger than the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. LOWIE, R. H., "Primitive Society," p. 13.

loyalty of its members to the Church. It refused to die and became, as many students of the subject believe, an incubus upon the Church.<sup>1</sup>

*k. New Institutions Have Had to Be Made Out of Old Materials.*—A final situation accounting for the impaired functioning of some institutions grows out of the fact that very few of them have been made without using the old ones as foundation, as materials for construction, or even as models, at least to a certain extent. In the past, it has been exceedingly difficult to construct an absolutely new structure for a new need with heretofore unused materials and unique plans and specifications. The knowledge, the technique, and the supporting group confidence for such a venture have not been available. The result has been institutions still too much rooted in the past, and unsuited to the new needs or aims; or institutions organized in ways quite inappropriate and foreign to their real function. The early Church, for example, borrowed the type of its institutions from the contemporary political kingdoms that were decidedly of this world. Consequently its Kingdom soon became an earthly one, and its energies were primarily devoted to the fatal struggle for temporal power.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. THE EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONAL INFLEXIBILITY, SURVIVANCE, AND DECADENCE

In the main, this tendency of institutions to forget the purposes for which they were organized or to carry out purposes that should be forgotten; to keep the form and forget the substance, to remain unchanged and intact and, consequently, to separate themselves from the active contemporary life of a people, is bad. It spells the beginning of decadence.

Old features and functions which are no longer of use continue to be maintained at a cost of energy and with a personnel which may be, usually is, sadly needed elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> Editorial, *Christian Century*, p. 1019, Aug. 23, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> See especially JACKS, L. P., "Institutional Selfishness," Essay XVII of "Realities and Shams," pp. 207-214.

Men become slaves of their ancestors' machines—machines whose needs are in many cases extinct and forgotten. Moreover, when life becomes institution ridden, the people have a false sense of security, for the seeming security comes of rigidity, routine, overstandardization, and overorganization, and is bought at the cost of progress and of a group life much less good than it might easily be with more flexible and more adaptable institutions.<sup>1</sup>

The activity, even the justifiable spontaneous activity, of the individual is fettered. The set patterns establish limits and tend to inhibit further learning and experimentation. Checking and criticism are taboo. The dynamic spirit of the group is crushed also, and we know that if the group is to be efficient functionally, there must not be a sense of constraint or even one of marked emphasis upon the conventionalities or formalities, but rather an intelligent spirit of inquiry and freedom. If this individual and social restraint persists the cultural advance of the group is usually retarded.

There is a further tendency for institutions to develop a sanctity and an inherent infallibility which causes them to become ends in themselves, final values and above criticism. This conforms to Stuckenberg's rule: "Whatever is vigorously and absorbingly pursued for a length of time tends to become an end."<sup>2</sup> The institutions persist and conceive of themselves as requiring no social justification since they have a virtue in themselves. The end or ends in view at the start are lost sight of, but the habit formed by the pursuit becomes permanent and directs the course of life and thinking. Hence, they enjoy status long after their social utility has passed away. We have the "shell" and all the formalities and conventions attached to it, but no real function.<sup>3</sup> What is developed originally

<sup>1</sup> Cf. MACIVER, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> STUCKENBERG, J. H. W., "Sociology, the Science of Society," Vol. 1 p. 355.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. COLE, "Social Theory," p. 195.



as means is still cherished when the ends have been secured or are antiquated and the means no longer necessary. The personnel becomes self-centered, powerful, and often self-perpetuating. Thus, schools founded for the search of truth in time abandon the search and continue to exist for a system no longer subjected to criticism; a church exists for its own sake as a sect rather than for religion—the sect has, in fact, become the religion; an etiquette form that once had a specific purpose continues after its meaning is gone; a constitution is drawn up as a functioning instrument, only to become a sacred and inviolable entity in itself. Men generally seem to be obsessed with the illusion that institutions once established have a merit in themselves.

The result of this is that the look tends to be backward instead of forward. The effort is no longer to grow, but to keep the growth which has already been attained. The institution's measures of value are sought in the past rather than the present. The main object is unchanging perpetuation. Often the institution is carried onward with such a momentum that it is projected far beyond its legitimate goal. The situation is especially aggravated when the institutions are closely bound up with special, controlling classes, prescriptive rights, or large vested interests.

But it is only the high functional value of institutions which entitles them to respect, support, and the authoritative position which they hold in human estimation.

Institutions are good or evil according to the ends they serve. They do not exist in their own right to overpower men, but only to serve them, and when they cease to serve them no antiquity and no sanctity can save them from condemnation.<sup>1</sup>

Man was not made for institutions; institutions were made for men; they are not ends to be held in reverence, but expedient means. As such, they must satisfy human and social needs; they must show positive social utility of a

<sup>1</sup> MACIVER, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-163.

high order. If they do this effectively it does not matter how old or how young they are.

There are, finally, the effects growing out of the tendency of institutions to become social vestigés. Now vestiges may be quite innocuous, except as involving the waste produced in nourishing them. But vestiges are likely to, and frequently do, become seats of dangerous disease, paralleling in this respect the human vermiform appendix and the tonsils. Similarly, various vestigial institutional remains, as history so frequently shows, are not only impediments to the life of the group, but also frequently threats to the continued social health as well.

This tendency of institutions to become antiquated, relatively unchanging, and resistant to change, in general, causes the institutional life to lag behind the evolving culture of the group and gives rise not only to some of the greatest difficulties connected with the operation of institutions but also to a large proportion of the so-called "social problems."

#### 5. THE INEVITABILITY OF CHANGE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FLEXIBILITY IN INSTITUTIONS

One of the things that history positively demonstrates is that social change is continuous and inevitable, universal and omnipresent. Nothing is fixed or stationary.<sup>1</sup> Circumstances are always, if slowly, changing. One generation's commonplaces are another generation's antiquities. The social products, apparently most permanent, are only relatively so, and actually undergo constant change. Old needs disappear, or change their nature markedly, and the processes and institutions that served them, unless they also change proportionately and appropriately, become antiquated and survivalistic. New needs appear and all the social agencies must be continually modified to meet them, or new agencies must be constructed. Hence, "what is stationary is adapted only to a stationary condi-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. HERTZLER, J. O., "Social Progress," p. 69.

tion.”<sup>1</sup> Applied to institutions this means that if they are to serve their life functions “they must be changed as life changes, transformed as life itself takes new direction.”<sup>2</sup> Urwick puts it well when he states that:

The powers, opportunities, or requirements of any institution or relationship do undergo continual change, and *must* change as society becomes conscious of new aims, or a fuller content is given to the conception of the common good.<sup>3</sup>

Stuckenberg carries the thought a step further when he says:

An institution is tested by its adaptation to the new conditions that arise in the course of evolution. If in its highest development, it fails to meet the demands, events themselves will pass out of its domain, prove it antiquated, and require a different principle of organization.<sup>4</sup>

Institutions are not permanent, nor are they immune from decay or dissolution.

It is clear to any careful student that a certain amount of change unavoidably occurs in institutions. According to the evidence, primitive institutions are continually changing; our institutions are changing now and will continue to change in response to a variety of factors. In spite of the conservatism of primitive men, the fixity of their judgments, their tendency to emphasize custom, their unwillingness to doubt or examine their traditional material, their culture, especially in its institutional phases, does not remain stationary. There is constant change, usually very slow and gradual, and for the most part unconscious. At times, though, this change may be sudden or at least greatly accelerated; contact with new groups, or with new civilizations, with new or unfamiliar physical environments, or the disappearance of a major economic resource, may in the space of a few generations produce

<sup>1</sup> STUCKENBERG, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> MACIVER, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> URWICK, E. J., “Philosophy of Social Progress,” p. 210.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 57.

marked changes. Internal expansion invariably leads to some change. To be sure, the better adapted institutional form comes slowly and by stealth, many fossil forms of the older system hang on to bedevil the new, but eventually the new takes the place of the old.

In modern times, institutions also have been changing in spite of themselves. Guizot, the historian of European civilization, after viewing the operation of the great institutional systems of his time, wrote more than a century ago:

In none of these systems can we discover anything fixed; all the institutions, as well as the social conditions, dwell together, continually confounded, continually changing.<sup>1</sup>

In the last century there have been occurrences which have forced institutions to change: the rapidly changing nature of our technology since the Industrial Revolution, the large scale of our contemporary social relationships, the multiplicity of our mental contacts due to the rapidly advancing means of communication, the extensive and varied stimulation of urban life, the extension and acceptance of science in daily life. These have produced unheard of changes in the home, the relation of the sexes, the workshop, religion, legislation, education, government, and almost every other set of institutions.

A general fact also stands out, which applies to primitive as well as to modern institutions. As Clow points out, an institution is composed of persons, and persons die off in time to be replaced by others who will be different to some extent. Hence, the personnel is continually changing and the functioning of the institution is affected to an extent at least. As he puts it: "The personnel of an institution is constantly changing like the drops of water in a cataract."<sup>2</sup> Hobhouse similarly points out that institutions gradually change and modify each other just through

<sup>1</sup> GUIZOT, "History of Civilization in Europe," Vol. I, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> CLOW, F. R., "Principles of Sociology with Educational Applications," p. 322.

the actions of individuals seeking to adapt themselves as best they may to their medium.<sup>1</sup> It is also true that the requirements of the institution increase and, hence, produce some change. New combinations of social forces unconsciously lead to change and reorganization—sometimes to improvement. Many of the institutions are also intelligently controlled and administered in the interests of general well being and are continually adapted to new purposes. The old institution is pruned and rebuilt and, if it is healthy and sound at the core, and has not been maimed by too much pruning, it will function efficaciously among the new conditions.<sup>2</sup> Institutions do change in spite of the conservatism and reactionism of their most prominent proponents.<sup>3</sup>

But the changes in so many cases, probably the majority of cases, are belated and then only partial; they do not come in a clear-cut way but are carried into effect grudgingly, half-heartedly, often disguised by fictions of various sorts, and even then come a generation or more after they are needed. The changes are often also counteracted by conscious forces of retardation at work; for many institutions, especially if they are regulative in character, are dominated by a privileged group within or a privileged group without, or by other private or semi-private interests, who are strategically situated socially, and capable of resisting proposals to abandon or alter the institutions which serve their interests, and insist not only upon durability but fixity. Invariably also, because of the retarded and grudging nature of the change, considerable confusion may result for a time.<sup>4</sup>

If institutions are not flexible and adaptable they cease to function effectively and become an obstacle rather than

<sup>1</sup> HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Metaphysical Theory of the State," p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. URWICK, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> It is facts of this type that have led Tourtoulon to exclaim: "Institutions are changing constantly, and these changes constitute a large part of history." "Philosophy in the Development of Law," p. 523.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ELLWOOD, C. A., "Sociology and Modern Social Problems," p. 165.

an aid. As Lester F. Ward points out, there is no human institution, however necessary it may have been at the time it was created, that will not sooner or later, become a burden unless it has the element of lability and is transformed under the influence of dynamic action.<sup>1</sup> Institutions must continually meet their new opportunities and requirements. When one feature of life changes, the other features must change in order to maintain a harmony of parts and functions. The family, just now, as the result of the changes produced by the Industrial Revolution, urban life, the emancipation of women, and birth control, must go through marked changes in a relatively short time. No one would deny, however, that in many of its functions and aims it is still largely geared to an independent household, rural, and man-made regime, and is dominated by supernatural revelation, superstition, and fiat. Similarly, as life becomes more complex, problems of group control become more extensive and acute and, as the general life interests of the individual increase, government must change to meet the new needs. But due to the sanctity of institutional elements, even if outgrown, attempted change is often sacrilege and abandonment is treason.

If institutions do not change sufficiently to meet the new needs, one of two results are likely to occur. In the first place, if the institution does not occupy too strategic a social position, or if it is not an absolute obstacle to general development, it will become increasingly ill adapted to the age, lose its vitality, suffer from dry rot, and in time fall into crumbling ruin. In the second place, however, if the institutions are highly important, as for example, certain basic political, economic, or religious institutions, and yet in the forms maintained are too rigid for modification and adaptation, nothing is left in relieving the strained condition but to overthrow and wreck them by revolutionary processes and make room for others which correctly

<sup>1</sup> "Pure Sociology," p. 268.

express the new social content.<sup>1</sup> A large proportion of the revolutions of history, whether social, economic, political or religious or any combination of these, have been bound up closely with the rigidity and decadence of institutions, as, for example, the Protestant Reformation, the Cromwellian Revolution, the French Revolution, or the Chinese, Mexican, and Russian revolutions of recent date. Revolutionary changes on a smaller scale are very frequent, as when a portion of a religious denomination succeeds in becoming strong enough to overthrow a harassing and repressive doctrine or creedal element, when in the relations of the generations ancient parental restrictions are thrown off, when in city government a particular form of administration becomes unbearable and is swept away *in toto*. But even in such cases, circumstances become about as bad as the group can stand before it will deliberately and consciously cut loose and modify or reconstruct its institutions. Eventually, though, the repression, the blocking of reorganization, the combined conservatisms, on the one hand, and the great new forces at work, on the other hand, changing fundamental conditions will produce crises which will force change, and if it does not come slowly and opportunely, it will come suddenly and often destroy as much as it corrects. Grow or die seems to be the law in all realms of life. The far-sighted policy is to keep an institution open minded, prepared to make modifications in method and organization, able to slough off ancient and outgrown elements that impair its efficiency, and keep it elastic and adjusted, so that it can continually be fitted to changing conditions.<sup>2</sup>

## 6. THE MODIFICATION AND ADAPTABILITY OF INSTITUTIONS

The various social problems growing out of the tendency of institutions to outlive their usefulness and become rigid

<sup>1</sup> For further discussion of a revolution and institutions, see BERNARD, *op. cit.*, p. 513; SUMNER, "Folkways," pp 118, 168; HERTZLER, "Social Progress," 478-486; ELLWOOD, "Psychology of Human Society," p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. DEALEY, *op. cit.*, p. 499; CLOW, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

and above criticism can only be solved by accelerating the modification of institutions so as to enable them to meet the requirements of the life of the time. There must be a progressive adaptation continually. As Stuckenberg maintains, "A progressive society cannot abide by antiquated institutions and effete forms."<sup>1</sup>

*a. The Possibility of Modification.*—Sociology demonstrates that few social institutions are wholly incapable of modification. Though they cannot always be changed by direct methods, they may be at least gradually transformed by indirect methods and the adoption of the appropriate means.<sup>2</sup> Institutions are not obstinate natural phenomena but, rather, social arrangements, essentially plastic and modifiable, capable of change. Furthermore, it is much easier to make institutions suit men and their needs than it is to make men to suit institutions. They are not only open to analysis and criticism, but to rational adaptation and transformation, even within a comparatively short time. By proper renovation, the useful life of an institution may be prolonged indefinitely.

In no sense is modification an abandonment of the old because it is old; it implies only the abandonment of the outgrown and useless. The valuable elements of the past are conserved. It is not desired to throw overboard any institutions, or any institutional elements, that can contribute to contemporary well being. Nor are institutions wanted that are so plastic as to be without strength; or so sensitive to passing changes as to be like thistledown. The best institution is one that is rigid enough to control and stabilize, but modifiable enough to change as soon as the need clearly points to a modification of the institutional form.

But, to effect this modification, we must know something of the origin of the institution, its history, its function, the conditions it is to control, and the various agencies avail-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. WARD, L. F., "Applied Sociology," p. 4.



able for its revision. The chief process, of course, is that of learning and education. The mental patterns which stand immediately behind the institution in question are learned adjustments, and they must be modified. If the learning process can unseat the customs, traditions, beliefs, and opinions that support the effete institutional form and replace them with positive and constructive attitudes and ideas, the institution is easily changed, provided, of course, also, as Ellwood points out, that "we can change those material conditions in the environment which have come to support the institution and perhaps make it advantageous for individuals or a class of individuals to maintain it."<sup>1</sup> This learning does occur, though it does not often take the form of formal instruction. Furthermore, to say that institutions are modifiable does not mean that human groups can devise any sort of institutions they choose and put them into effect, for, as Ellwood states,<sup>2</sup> "while there are many wrong ways of constructing institutions there are only a few right ways," and the various limitations and requirements must be carefully followed. Other factors of significance in the modifiability of institutions follow.

*b. The Need of a Periodic Audit of Institutions.*—All institutions ought to be examined periodically to see whether they are satisfying the specific needs for which they were designed, or doing any useful work, or doing it as well as it could be done by other institutions which might be put in their places. The institutions that are functioning well would not only show up favorably, but would welcome such an audit, and the results would serve only to strengthen confidence in them and devotion to them. On the other hand, if institutions sought to avoid such scrutiny it would indicate a recognition of the unsufficiency of the institution on the part of the personnel, or it would point to a claim that the institution was so sacred that it had a right to exist whether it had a function or not.

<sup>1</sup> "Christianity and Social Science," Vol. 18, pp. 17-19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Every group frequently needs to ask itself whether its institutions are really accomplishing what they are supposed to accomplish, whether they are being supported merely for traditional or sentimental reasons, or whether it lacks the mental and moral energy to consider what results are desired and how these results can be properly attained. Some of our most important and most firmly established institutions need such an audit most. In general:

It should be an audit which takes nothing for granted, which allows no glamor from the past and no recognition of former services to serve as a substitute for present performance, and which will not set the stamp of its approval upon any institution which cannot prove that it is now doing its work better than any other that could be put in its place.<sup>1</sup>

*c. Dynamic Leaders and Informed Laymen.*—The actual modification depends largely upon the leaders in the different institutional fields, who, because of their inventive and imaginative minds can see the superior form, and because of their energy, eloquence, and resourcefulness can inspire confidence and carry the changes into effect. Changes are and must be initiated by exceptional individuals. But the change is finally dependent upon its acceptance by the whole community. The influence of the individual leaders, however highly placed or trusted, is confined to their sagacity in perceiving and thinking out what changes are necessary or desirable, and to their skill in persuading their fellows of their sincerity, in exemplifying the changes they advocate.<sup>2</sup> Always the collective opinion must sustain the change. Hence, there is a particularly great need of intelligent and constructively minded laymen—men who have the highest social ideals and aims, and who are willing to divorce themselves of their unjustifiable conservatism, and encourage and participate in the timely

<sup>1</sup> Editorial, "A Periodic Audit of Institutions," *Christian Century*, Aug. 23, 1928. The writer hereby acknowledges his indebtedness to this article for several of the ideas expressed in this section. See Sec. C, Exercises 4 and 5 of Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> HARTLAND, E. S., "Primitive Law," pp. 211-212.

readjustment of institutional forms to changing social needs.

For the general education of the laymen, it is highly beneficial for a society to encourage intelligent public criticism, free discussion, and free thought about social conditions and social institutions. Such discussion informs and clarifies the public mind, tends to encourage in the constituency constructive viewpoints for the survey of the institutional situation, encourages sensitivity to the quality of their operation, and leads to thought and action out of which grow deliberately devised superior institutional forms.

*d. The Competition of Institutions as a Factor in Their Adaptability.*—Institutions resist competition with other institutions for the allegiance of the individuals of the group. They do this because their administrative personnel does not want to be unseated, most of their adherents have inherited loyalty to the institution, and none want the unsettling which comes from forced modification. Hence, they seek to avoid competition in the various ways which Professor Ross has so well pointed out, namely, (1) by attempting to destroy the competitor, (2) by withdrawing from competition if possible, (3) by constrained adaptation, or (4) by specialization in a pseudo-exclusive field of its own.<sup>1</sup>

And yet this competition is one of the surest forces in the institution's accommodation to the conditions of the moment and the people it is supposed to serve. No institution should be exempt from competition. Without competition it stands still or even degenerates; with it, it is continually forced by the exigencies of survival to check upon its efficacy and continually to reconstruct itself in order to serve its function well in meeting the needs

<sup>1</sup> The writer hereby acknowledges his indebtedness to PROF. E. A. ROSS, "Principles of Sociology," pp. 208-221, for the essence of this section. See also LUMLEY, F. E., "Principles of Sociology," pp. 159-162; BERNARD, L. L., *op. cit.*, p. 511; HART, J. K., *The Survey*, Vol. 49, pp. 33-35, October, 1922.

and will of its constituency. As Professor Ross states the matter:<sup>1</sup>

The competition for public favor between parties, sects, schools, universities, governments, manners and ideals brings about that adaptation of institution to the will of the people which characterizes democratic society . . . As organizations and institutions compete, their line of development becomes subject to the general trend of opinion and feelings.

Hence, no institution should be "shielded from competition by any special privilege or advantage," particularly not by religious or political protection. The aspiring institutional forces should be tolerated and have freedom to try themselves out in ways socially safe. The oncoming generation should be permitted freely to choose the institutional forms they desire to embrace; in fact, they should be encouraged to make a choice only after careful observation and study. The members must be free to detach themselves from old institutional organizations without prejudice or unreasonable loss, and join new ones or none at all. Interinstitutional migration is especially efficacious and, hence, desirable as a liberalizing force. Efficient operation at the present time, and under the present conditions, should be the only reason for the allegiance of its adherents and the only claim upon public favor. Free and fair competition does much to assure this. In fact, it forces telic activity upon the institution.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

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## CHAPTER XII

### THE FUTURE OF INSTITUTIONS

Any discussion of the future of institutions is necessarily a discussion of the trends of institutions now in evidence, and those that can be confidently anticipated on the basis of present-day scientific analysis and knowledge. In what follows some attempt is made to delineate such trends.

#### 1. WILL THERE BE AN INCREASE OR A DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS?

This question cannot be answered definitely. There are several points of view that must be considered. One of these is that as life becomes more complex and impersonal, bringing an increase in both the extent and the complexity of human association and involving larger and larger masses of people in multiplied impersonal cooperative activities, it will require an ever higher degree of regimentation of life for the sake of maintaining culture, order, and well being. It is quite likely, consequently, that institutions, and all other psycho-social controls, will increase, for they are our technique, suited in nature, content, and function for doing these necessary things. Furthermore, modern communities in general are growing and, as Hobhouse remarks: "As the community grows a much higher technique is required to secure any effective cooperation."<sup>1</sup> Such changes among historical peoples have always resulted in more numerous and more efficient institutions. If the premises here set forth are correct there will continually be more and more institutions.

On the other hand, due to the increase in the means of communication and transportation, the peoples of the

<sup>1</sup> HOBHOUSE, L. T., "Social Development," p. 34.

civilized world at least are gradually developing a common culture. The plane or rather the area in which the selective forces operate among all cultural forms, including institutions, is expanding from the local group and even the nationality group to the entire communicative area, and this is rapidly coming to be the entire planet. Now this may mean that, because of the great possibilities of comparison and checking of institutional forms, in fact, because of the impossibility of avoiding this, the great diversity of special forms, especially local eccentricities, will cease to be, and there will be a smaller number in each institutional field the world over and these will be much more uniform in nature and function. There is some evidence that this is now occurring in some institutional fields; for example, the economic, political, and æsthetic fields. Regardless of whether this cross-fertilization of cultures will have this effect to any considerable extent, it will unavoidably result in richer and more efficient institutions the world over.

In either case there will be no diminution of need for institutions. In the confusion growing out of the innumerable changes—economic, domestic, social, political, religious, and the various combinations of these—and the variety and expansion and abstraction of human contacts in modern dynamic, mobile, kaleidoscopic societies, continuous adjustment must occur, and it must be aided by adequate regulatory agencies as never before. Furthermore, the groupings today are becoming increasingly derivative as the primary groups break down and lose their functions. Because of this, also, effective institutionalization of behavior is necessary. Differences of behavior and interests of individuals along all the socially vital lines will always have to be regulated and made uniform; order, and all freedom consistent with general well being will have to be preserved; basic individual and social needs will have to be met in socially acceptable ways. Whether they increase or diminish in number, a certain number of highly efficient institutions will be absolutely indispensable.

## 2. THE TREND TOWARD CRITICISM AND TESTING OF INSTITUTIONS

Furthermore, regardless of which of the trends discussed in the previous section develops among all the institutions that exist, there will be needed an accurate appraisal of institutions and a careful selection of the useful and efficient ones, combined with a deliberate elimination or reconstruction of the unfit ones and the provision of necessary new ones, or at least new forms, if the social order is to be suitable for good living. In the present, as has often been the case in the past, many fairly useful institutions will be improved and advanced because individuals and groups will find them partly inadequate, rise above them, and lift them to the new, higher plane, and they will then be suited to the new age.<sup>1</sup>

An exceedingly encouraging situation for all those who are interested in a society which is good, and are hopeful of one that is better, is the fact that the institutions of the modern world are being tested in the crucible of fiery criticism. As never before, they are being examined and weighed and evaluated; their operation and efficacy are being checked in the light of the wants and needs they are to satisfy and the purposes they have been designed to serve. There has always, of course, been some criticism and evaluating of institutions, but it is greater in volume and more pointed and more intelligent and is participated in by a larger proportion of the members of groups today than ever before. Entire peoples—Turkey, Russia, China, Mexico—are being violently aroused from the lethargy of protracted sleep, and are examining and criticizing every institution.

There exists, especially among the younger generation the world over, an aversion to accepting institutions on traditional authority, a spirit of questioning, a disposition to challenge and cross-examine, and a wholesome dissatisfaction with all established systems and institutions.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. BUCKLE, H. T., "The History of Civilization in England," Vol. 2, pp. 182-183.



There is a tendency to require all things social to show good cause for their existence, to insist that they fulfill their actual function, and to demonstrate efficiency in operation.<sup>1</sup> There is generally a determination to arrive at something better, and a willingness to do a certain amount of experimenting to bring this about.

As never before, we are capable of profiting by failure and mistakes, of rectifying errors, supplying deficiencies, and providing the necessary new elements. Furthermore, while practically all contemporary institutions are to an extent products of the creativeness of man, this creativeness is now playing a continually larger part in the making and especially the remaking of institutions and bids fair to play an even more important role in the future. The unconscious and unintended element seems certain to become smaller and smaller as we develop a more complete knowledge and mastery of ourselves and our world, especially our social world. Significant, also, in this connection is the fact that never before have men been so ready to make necessary changes. More and more will men deliberately remould their institutions to serve their dominant interests. Therefore, we must not, even in the case of the most vital institutions, so exactly define their function, sphere of action, or form, or set up such rigid machinery for their operation as to prevent them from developing the power and agencies to exercise their function of tomorrow.

### 3. THE TELIC MODIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONS THROUGH SCIENCE

An increasing number of agencies for conscious readaptation of institutions and also for the construction of new institutions to meet the new needs are becoming available. Especially significant in this connection are those provided by modern science, particularly social science. While

<sup>1</sup> Notable are the articles that have been appearing in our journals in recent years examining and criticizing our educational systems, our religious institutions, our juries, forms of city government, the family, marriage, etc.

scientific analysis has come much later in the social field than in the field of natural phenomena, it is now definitely under way, still groping, to be sure, still trying to overcome various difficulties of method, but, considering its obstacles, its adolescent nature, and the unwieldy, complex, and practically uncontrollable phenomena with which it has to deal, it is doing a surprisingly good job in the sector of scientific endeavor properly assignable to it. Social science, particularly sociology, has obstacles to overcome and complexities to allow for to a degree that none of the other sciences have to face. There is, for example, the practical impossibility of experimentation, due to the fact that the units in the problems are constituted either of human beings who are morally free agents, with wills and eccentricities and innumerable variations of their own; or they are more or less unwieldy, uncontrollable human groups. In other words, the controls over environment and the combinations of elements, and the exclusion of variables which the laboratory scientist establishes to limit his problem and to give him a precise and regular cause and effect relationship, are practically impossible for the sociologist. Furthermore, social phenomena involve expanses of time and, since they consist of human beings, cannot be speeded up; they are mutually dependent and cannot be isolated, except in thought, and then invariably some violence is done to the particular object or phenomenon because it is an inseparable part of a complex; unforeseen and unaccountable factors arise, probably because of the fact again that human beings are involved and each one is unique.<sup>1</sup> Hence, to cope with these peculiar difficulties, sociology has and is developing unique fact-finding methods of its own suited to the analysis of the type of phenomena with which it must deal. The successes have already been great enough to demonstrate that careful and trustworthy analyses can be made, and reasonably

<sup>1</sup> See also BOUCKE, O. F., "The Limits of Social Science," *Am. J. Sociology*, Vol. 28, pp. 300-318, November, 1922; Vol. 28, pp. 443-460, January, 1928.

accurate and usable data collected, enabling those properly informed to interpret and even anticipate trends, and actually to control and direct at least some of the social processes to constructive ends.

This new scientific emphasis is also having its effect upon the study and the direction of the development of social institutions. With the advance of the social sciences, man has actually acquired a technology enabling him, first, to accumulate reliable knowledge regarding the structure and function of institutions; second, to see and causally interpret the defects in institutions in the past and the mistakes in their administration; on the basis of these he builds a substantial understanding of the essentials of institutions and is enabled, third, not only to correct, but also intelligently to reconstruct and invent institutions so that they satisfy perceived needs.<sup>1</sup> Things have come to the point where we can, in a measure, utilize science in our own collective control and advancement. Due to the fact that we can now build up efficient administrative organizations and have available constructive techniques, we can modify and perfect our institutions consciously and develop them with foresight in socially desirable directions; we can have them meet definite specifications set by the new knowledge, and fit in with the various limitations that exist.

The newer social psychology especially enables man not only to understand, but to instruct, and even to manipulate the thinking and opinions of the mass of men. We know how to inform them on a large scale, and give them impressions and ideas, how to change their beliefs and attitudes, and direct their desires, all of which is prerequisite to the modification of institutions, since the concept is the most significant part of the institution. Equally significant is the fact that we can, in a measure, manipulate and direct the phenomena out of which grow the needs that require institutions for their social satisfaction. As a result, not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. BERNARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 566-569.

only the attitude toward institutions, but the content and administration is changing. Bernard states:

The findings of scientific investigators are the most trustworthy conventional content of the institutional controls. "Gradually as scientific data and principles accumulate, they are substituted for what is untrustworthy in the traditional content of institutions, and thus the institutions are revised on a tested knowledge basis. The administrative procedure in the institution is also revised to conform to the scientifically amended theory of its organization.

He continues:

This process of revision of institutions on the basis of scientific knowledge goes on slowly as yet, but it is the most hopeful fact in the modern social control situation. Through this means we may expect ultimately to secure a fairly rational organization of society, which will select the habits of its members into an economical and efficient and normal cooperative or collective plan of life.<sup>1</sup>

Of course this scientific reorganization of institutions is not equally noticeable in all institutional fields. It is perhaps most noticeable in the industrial, governmental, health, communicative, and educational fields. In spite of much strongly expressed opposition, it is entering the fields of religious, domestic, and ethical institutions. It may even in time have some effect on æsthetic institutions. Furthermore, there is so much that is merely traditional and customary in all of our institutions that needs to be replaced by elements that are scientifically tested. But as Bernard repeats:

The great prerequisite to making this rational reorganization effective is an ever increasing fund of scientific knowledge covering all of the fields of human relationship.<sup>2</sup>

It is largely due to this scientific development in the field of social phenomena and to the new scientific spirit, which is essentially progressive, that men have begun to seek after the best institutions, and the best means of inaugurating them. It must be admitted, however, that they still do this only half-heartedly.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 574.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 575.

## 4. THE SPIRITUAL AND IDEALISTIC TREND IN INSTITUTIONS

As man's individual and social needs have developed and become more refined, as they have become more and more controlled by reflection, and as groups have organized for their promotion, the functions of his institutions have been elevated and they have become more spiritual and idealistic.<sup>1</sup>

Even those institutions growing out of man's instinctive wants are showing spiritual and idealistic tendencies. In the economic and industrial field, many of the institutions are rising above the mere satisfaction of certain wants and are attempting to satisfy wants in a qualitative way. The most impersonal industrial institutions are being touched by humanitarian motives, and seek not only instinctive, but humanitarian ends. Religious institutions, while still mollifying primitive fears, among many civilized peoples make it their dominant function to satisfy great social and spiritual needs and exalt the individual and lift him to sublime heights by bringing him in harmony with the spirit of the universe. Political institutions, especially government, instead of being merely social devices for protection against enemies and for maintaining internal order and rights, have come to actively participate, in fact, have become the chief agency, in constructive social welfare activities. Education, instead of devoting itself merely to passing on to successive generations the lore necessary to successful living, is becoming everywhere a great agent a cultural diffusion and hopes for and directs its energies toward a life for all that is continually on a higher plane, culturally and spiritually. The family has long since ceased to be merely a reproductive and child-rearing agency and has among many peoples assumed positive spiritual and idealistic tasks.

Institutions have arisen, also, whose main duty it is to serve humanitarian or idealistic rather than the organic

<sup>1</sup> Cf. BERNARD, "Introduction to Social Psychology," p. 565. See also, FAIRBANKS, A., "Introduction to Sociology," pp. 128-145.

and instinctive needs of men. Thus, the ethical institutions always seek a quality of conduct; and the æsthetic institutions deal with beauty, which is essentially spiritual.<sup>1</sup> There are unmistakable tendencies which point to the fact that men are making their institutions not only "means to live," but "means to live well"—to live nobly—means of realizing spiritual stature. There are good reasons for believing that these tendencies will become more pronounced in the future.

#### 5. THE NEED OF COOPERATION AMONG THE INSTITUTIONS

While certain trends are observable at present in the fields of institutions, certain needs also must be mentioned. We are beginning to sense the importance of a greater cooperation between various institutions that are more or less linked in the various activities of a given place and era. At present, however, the institutional fields are crystallized and limit themselves to certain conventional social areas and procedures. This is partly due to an exaggerated division of social labor; but, mainly, it is due to the desire of the personnel either to avoid responsibility where they properly have some, as in the case of the employer who does not permit his responsibility toward his employees to extend beyond the gates of his plant even though he is the sole source of economic support of their families, or it is due to a desire on the part of the personnel to create a professional exclusiveness and a vested interest, as in the case of almost every profession bound up with an institution, as the law or the clergy or even the teaching profession. And yet the social needs that must be met are not unilateral, but exceedingly complex, extending over several institutional fields. For such situations, a close cooperation of both the institutions and the specialized institutional personnel is necessary. That this is not the case to the degree and with the spirit necessary is apparent. Law has become so formalized and institutionalized that

<sup>1</sup> Cf. BERNARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 566-567.

business men have occasionally created their own tribunals to settle their legal difficulties without the formal assistance of the legal profession. Science and religion, though both are concerned with the solution or at least adjustment to the major problems of living, not only are not cooperating, but still are, to a considerable extent, at loggerheads with each other. Modern industry and the modern family are inextricably related in half a dozen ways, but so far each has gone its own way, with unfortunate results for both. In the opinion of many there ought to be a continual cooperation between art and ethics—something which is conspicuous by its absence in certain art fields, such as the drama. Pathological social situations will exist until essential cooperation is effected wherever needed.

#### 6. THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE USE OF INSTITUTIONS

Because of the vast influence which institutions exercise in shaping individuals and in providing a type and quality of social regulation, it is essential that they be administered in the interests of greatest well being. In theory, since the institutions emanate from a people, the responsibility should rest upon them as a whole. In fact, however, this is not the case, for in every society some individuals have greater responsibility for the functioning and content of institutions at any given time than have others. In some cases, this power is assumed because given by the group, either by some special method of selection or by custom; in other cases, it is deliberately assumed by taking advantage of situations as they arise, and is wielded for private or class ends. Where the control or administration of institutions has been in the hands of clever though unscrupulous and unsocial or even anti-social individuals or cliques much harm has resulted. The institutions not only have functioned poorly, but actually have become instruments of confusion and evil. Law, for example, has been used to sanction, or even facilitate, nearly every form of oppression, extortion, class advantage, and even judicial murder.

Economic institutions, instead of furthering life for all, have been selfishly manipulated and all ends subverted to the financial advancement of a very few. Art institutions, because they were dominated by a spiritually bankrupt group, have debased the æsthetic tastes of an entire people. Churches, controlled by a clique, have become agencies of personal aggrandizement rather than means of producing citizens of the universe.

In the last analysis, the responsibility for the use and effect of institutions must rest upon administrators, leaders of thought, individuals of prestige, or the professions intimately involved with respective institutions. Thus, the responsibility for the law and its uses rests upon the members of the judiciary and bar; the conduct of industry rests upon the captains of industry, and the major holders of stocks; the responsibility for the type of churches we have and their activities rests upon the strategically situated clergy and the prominent laymen; the responsibility for the family and marriage rests upon all who shape public opinion regarding these such as ministers, ethicists, sociologists, as well as the more prominent or conspicuous married people; the responsibility for art institutions rests upon the founders of schools of art and conspicuous artists; and so on. In the main, the institutions will be no better than these individuals or groups make them. What they do is of vital social importance. What is needed in continually greater measure is a willingness to accept not only the social power but also the unmistakable obligation of administering the institutions in a high-minded and thoroughly socialized manner. Finally, the nature and quality of institutions in the future rest pretty largely in the hands of the leaders and administrators and publicists of the present.

## 7. THE RELATION OF INSTITUTIONS TO PROGRESS

Progress is coming to be a universal desire, and progress is always in the future. The end of progress is coming to



be recognized as consisting of a constant enrichment of personality, of the production of human beings of high quality. It is occurring when self is finding fulfillment, when all the various individual potentialities have the opportunity and incitement for maximum realization in a socially acceptable way, when life becomes more and more abundant. But if there is to be such a rich and stimulating individual existence, it must be sustained by a manifold social culture. Hence, it is obvious that if progress is to occur, it will have to come largely through institutions. For they are the dominant elements in that social *milieu* in which self comes to its expression; they are the sources of most inspiring and enriching stimuli. They are also the necessary vehicles—the instruments located at the strategic points, not only for ordering but also for perfecting the social life. In fact, any social achievement is only possible through them.<sup>1</sup> Thus Ellwood is led to exclaim:

The higher developments of social organization and evolution are to be achieved only through the development and perfection of the higher instruments of social life, especially government, law, religion, morality, and education. Without the fullest development of all of these, neither harmonious social order nor enduring social progress are possible.<sup>2</sup>

Excellent institutions are indispensable to progress.

Progress involves the organization of society, and the manipulation of institutions, especially the formative institutions, such as many of the communicative institutions, especially the press, and also such institutions as education, government, the family, the recreational, ethical, and religious institutions, in such a way as to habituate people to the performance of the functions which will make for social progress. Furthermore, not only are institutions the crystallized products of social attitudes, they are also the shapers of attitudes; and progressive atti-

<sup>1</sup> WARD, L. F., "Applied Sociology," p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> "Sociology in its Psychological Aspects," p. x. Schmoller also once said, "Through more righteous and better institutions, men are trained to higher forms of existence."

tudes are the basis of all progress. Hence, if there is to be progress, it is a responsibility of institutions to shape their constituents attitudinally along their special lines in such a manner that their reactions will be progressive. It is also true that since human nature is more or less modifiable, its modification occurs largely through the influence of institutions. Looking at history, one is inclined to think that the progress of the world to date has not been due to any great extent to the improvement of human character; it has been due almost wholly to improvement in human institutions.<sup>1</sup> Men have not changed themselves much as individuals; rather, they have changed the agencies and expressions of their collective life. It seems that the better world will always be a world of better institutions.<sup>2</sup>

Hence the close connection between this section and the preceding chapter. There is a need for a method of study which shall evaluate the multitudinous controls of specific institutions in terms of their bearing upon the decay or creation of human progress. When modification of the institutions is desired or necessary, it should always be carried out along lines which will make it conformable to progressive ends, and many of these progressive ends are now reasonably precise and generally accepted among social thinkers.<sup>3</sup> All the general agents of progress, such as knowledge, science and invention, exceptional, individuals, ideals and progress, public opinion, and education, are also usable in the progressive modification of institutions.<sup>4</sup>

It must not be thought that the continually necessary, conscious modification of institutions will be accomplished without some rending and upheaving of things established and even sacred. Nor will it come without great and often entrenched opposition. Nor will it be impossible to keep out impostors, notoriety seekers, ignorant but well-meaning

<sup>1</sup> WARD, L. F., *op. cit.*, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> See HERTZLER, J. O., "Social Progress," Chaps. XV-XXV.

<sup>3</sup> See Chap. V. of my "Social Progress."

<sup>4</sup> See *Ibid.*, Chaps. IX-XIV.

enthusiasts, or extremists. Nor will the rank and file be eager for continually better and more appropriate institutions. Nor will the modification come without an increasing restraint and a diminution of the personal liberty of some individuals. But every social thinker knows that all progressive change is accompanied by costs and obstacles; costs that in time diminish and disappear; obstacles that must always be reckoned with, but which are not insurmountable.

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- HERTZLER, J. O.: "Social Progress," pp. 83-104, 550-574, The Century Company, New York, 1928.

## APPENDIX

### SUGGESTED STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The preceding monograph has confined itself to a general analysis of the basic elements and aspects of social institutions in an attempt to give a comprehensive view of their nature, composition, evolution, operation, enforcement, transmission, and innate and future tendencies. It is conceivable, however, that many readers will wish to pursue their study further into the various ramifications of the subject, and also carry on independent investigations along the lines of the general principles and conclusions set forth above. Therefore a series of projects of various kinds are suggested.<sup>1</sup>

#### A. ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDIES

1. The social institutions of European Paleolithic and Neolithic peoples. A study of fields, types, peculiar qualities and characteristics, theoretical significance of findings, etc. Consult such literature as:

DE MORGAN, J.: "Prehistoric Man," Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, London, 1921.

OSBORN, H. F.: "Men of the Old Stone Age," Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1919.

PARKYN, E. A.: "Prehistoric Art," Longmans Green and Co., London, 1915.

TYLER, J. M.: "The New Stone Age in Northern Europe," Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1921.

2. The social institutions of Particular Primitive Peoples, as found treated in such books as:

BROWN, A. R.: "The Andaman Islanders," University Press, Cambridge, 1922.

<sup>1</sup> See especially PALMER, V. M., "Field Studies in Sociology," University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1928.

- CROOKE, W.: "Natives of Northern India," Constable, London, 1907.  
 CZAPLICKA, M. A.: "Aboriginal Siberia," Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1914.  
 IVENS, W. G.: "Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands," Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, London, 1927.  
 MCGOVERN, J. B. MONTGOMERY: "Among the Head-Hunters of Formosa," Small Maynard, Boston, 1922.  
 RIVERS, W. H. R.: "The Todas," The Macmillan Co. Ltd, London, 1906.  
 SELIGMANN, C. G. and B. Z.: "The Veddas," University Press, Cambridge, 1911.

3. A resume of the development of language. Of writing. Of art. (See Bibliography for Chap. V.)

4. The institutions of ancient civilizations, as for example, those of Egypt, Babylonia, India, China, the Hebrews, Greece, Rome. As literature use the various histories of these peoples. Suggestive are:

- BURY, J. B., S. A. COOK, F. E. ADCOCK: "The Cambridge Ancient History," University Press, Cambridge, 1923-1928.  
 BREASTED, J. H.: "A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest," Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1910.  
 ———: "Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt," Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1912.  
 PETRIE, W. M. F.: "History of Egypt," 3 Vols, Methuen, London, 1899  
 ———: "Social Life in Ancient Egypt," Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923.  
 ROSTOVTSSEV, M. I.: "A History of the Ancient World," Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1926, 2 Vols.  
 ———: "The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire," Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1926.  
 SEIGNOBOS, M. J. C.: "Ancient Empires of the East," Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1906.  
 WEBSTER, H.: "Ancient History," D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1913.

5. Studies in the rise of the institutions of western civilization, such as Science, Education, Religious Sects, Social Classes, Capitalism, Industry, Modern States, etc. with special emphasis upon causes and changes. Such literature as:

- ADAMS, G. B.: "Civilization during the Middle Ages," Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1914.  
 BLACKMAR, F. W.: "History of Human Society," Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1926.

- CHEYNEY, E. P.: "An Introduction to the Industrial and Social History of England," The Macmillan Company, New York, 1920.
- CUNNINGHAM, W.: "Western Civilization in Its Economic Aspects," University Press, Cambridge, 1898-1900, 2 Vols.
- GUIZOT, F. P. G.: "History of Civilization," D. Appleton & Company, New York, 1867-1870, 4 Vols.
- HAYES, C. J. H.: "Political and Social History of Modern Europe," The Macmillan Company, New York, 1924, 2 Vols.
- HEARNshaw, F. J. C.: "Medieval Contributions to Modern Civilization," Harrap, London, 1921.
- RANDALL, J. H.: "Making of the Modern Mind," Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1926
- SEDGWICK, W. T. and H. W. TYLER, "A Short History of Science," The Macmillan Company, New York, 1923.
- TAWNEY, R. H.: "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism," Harcourt Brace & Company, New York, 1926.
- TAYLOR, H. O.: "Medieval Mind," Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London, 1911, 2 Vols.

6. Studies in the History of the Church since the first century, emphasizing causes for changes. Utilizing the voluminous literature on the history of Christianity and the Church.

7. Studies in the History of Matrimonial and Domestic Institutions. Depending upon such literature as:

- CALHOUN, A. C.: "Social History of the American Family," A. H. Clark Co., Cleveland, 1917-1919, 2 Vols.
- HOWARD, G. E.: "A History of Matrimonial Institutions," University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1905, 3 Vols.
- WESTERMARCK, E.: "History of Human Marriage," The Macmillan Company, New York, 1921, 3 Vols.

8. Studies in the history of various prominent institutions, such as Education, the Law, Art, etc., in a particular nation.

9. On the basis of the various histories of the West and other documentary materials giving data about the settlements of the frontier, record in the order of their appearance the institutions that were established in a selected number of settlements. Account both for the particular institutions and the order of their appearance, keeping in mind the relative importance of the needs.

## B. GENERAL ANALYTICAL STUDIES

1. The effects of the Industrial Revolution upon the family, including the family as a production unit, a consumption unit, the relations of the sexes, women and child labor, family stability, etc. Consult the voluminous literature on the Industrial Revolution and the recently produced material on the modern family.

2. Trace as far as you can the changes produced in the major institutions of western civilization as the result of the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, and the World War. Account for the changes.

3. Select the unique institutions and institutional forms, and the peculiarly local characteristics of the major institutions of a given community (*e.g.*, your home county, town, or city). Account for these on the grounds of resources, location, history, population elements, etc.

4. Select eight cities in the United States of outstanding industrial or commercial significance. Account for their location on environmental grounds.

5. Take some particular institution in your community, such as the Y. M. C. A., a religious denomination, the prevailing form of marriage, your family, the school, and on the basis of Chap. III dissect it into its separate parts.

6. Make a study of the various articles on social institutions over a period of time in such journals as *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harpers Magazine*, *Forum*, *Century*, *Nation*, *New Republic*, *American Mercury*, *Scribners*, *Worlds Work*, etc., as to the institutions examined, nature of treatment, nature of criticism (if any), constructive proposals (if any), etc. Account for such articles.

7. Make an analysis of the institutions of Babylonia as deducible from the Code of Hammurabi.

8. If you have the opportunity make an analysis of the relationship of institutions. For example, when the type of farming in a community changes does it affect the schools, churches, family life, recreation, and population

structure? When industry (i.e., factories) enters any village, town or particular section of a city, what are the institutions that must necessarily evolve to meet the problems and conditions that arise? (These studies suggested by Melvin, B. L., "Sociology in Process," *Social Forces*, Vol. 5, 52-56, Sept. 1926.)

9. With the sort of studies made by R. Pound, "Social and Economic Problems of the Law," *Ann. Am. Acad. Political and Social Science*, pp. 1-9; March, 1928 and Chapin, F. S., "Cultural Change," Chap. X, as examples, make studies of lag in adjustment of other institutions to needs. Analyze the factors responsible for the lag.

10. Analyze institutionalism as a social disease, as to symptoms, causes, treatment, prevention. See:

COOLEY, C. H. "Social Organization," pp. 342-355.

HERTZLER, J. O.: "Social Progress," pp. 541-542.

INGE, W. R.: "Institutionalism and Mysticism" in "Outspoken Essays," 2nd ser., pp. 230-242, especially pp. 240-242.

PETERS, C. C.: "Foundations of Educational Sociology," pp. 278-279.

ROSS, E. A.: "Principles of Sociology," pp. 488-489, 501-510.

SIMONS, S. E.: "Social Decadence," *Ann. Am. Acad. of Political and Social Science*, pp. 73-77, September, 1901.

11. Make a detailed analysis from the social psychological point of view of institutions as a phase of environment.

12. Show the difficulties which arise from the fact that new institutions often are built on institutions in other fields as models. For example, it is often stated that the early Christian Church was built on the Roman state as its model; present day schools and business establishments have taken over the military form of organization, it is said.

13. Summarize and evaluate the institutional approach to economics. See:

CLARK, J. M.: "Recent Developments in the Social Sciences," pp. 271-277.

EDIE, L. D.: "Some Positive Contributions of the Institutional Concept," *Quart. J. Econ.*, Vol. 41, pp. 405-440, May, 1927.

HAMILTON, W. H.: "An Institutional Approach to Economic Theory," *Am. Econ. Assoc. Proc.*, Vol. 9, pp. 309-318.

ANDERSON, JR., B. M. "Social Value," Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1911.



14. List the names of individuals that have left their definite impress on various contemporary institutions of American life, such as religious denominations, political forms, economic institutions, etc., giving their specific contributions.

15. Make a study of some case of competition among institutions, historical, or contemporary and local (see Chap. XI, Sec. 6d).

16. Present in a general way the changes of values as exemplified in the development of the family, the church, or the state.

17. What conditions are essential in general for the stability of institutions?

18. What are the causes of the inertia of institutions?

19. List the various types or classes of people, the occupational or professional groups, and the organizations that would oppose family or marriage reform, political changes, modification of denominational creeds and policies, revision of industrial or business practices, city charter or state constitution revisions, educational reforms, and new schools of art. Do the same individuals or groups oppose all these institutional changes, or do they oppose some and favor others? Account for your findings.

20. What should be the individual's attitude respecting conformity to the requirements of institutions? What should it be if he is convinced that the institution is not meeting its present obligations? Does the vital nature of the particular institution in the organization of the given group have anything to do with it?

21. Would there be a greater respect for and appreciation of institutions if all were informed as to their nature and function in social organization?

22. On the basis of the extensive literature on the Russian Revolution determine whether the condition of Russian institutions was responsible for the Revolution, and how the institutions have been affected by it.

23. Select what are for you six major values in your life. Point out the extent and nature of the influence of institutions in providing you with these values.

24. Make a fairly detailed analysis by periods of any one set of institutions (*e.g.*, the religious, political, or domestic) of the Hebrews on the basis of the Old Testament, with the aid of scientific commentators.

25. The population of the world has doubled in the last century. Upon what sets of institutions have the new problems of adjustment and control chiefly fallen? What general modifications have they undergone?

26. Do insects have institutions? See:

BOUVIER, E. L. "The Psychic Life of Insects," The Century Company, New York, 1922.

FABRE, J. H. "Social Life in the Insect World," The Century Company, New York, 1912.

WHEELER, W. M. "Social Life Among the Insects," Harcourt Brace & Company, New York, 1923

27. Outline what you consider to be the changes essential if the five institutions that you are most interested in, in your community, are to be 100 per cent efficient in fulfilling the needs for which they were devised.

28. Make a study of the characteristic institutions of some abnormal group or unique section of a city, as a ward predominating in homeless men, a rooming-house district, Little Italy, hobohemia, etc.

29. Compare the outstanding traits and component elements of a given number of institutions in both the country and the city. Account for the variations on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the underlying conditions in each case.

30. Select one or more available immigrant families. List the institutional holdovers from the "old country" that still persist even though inappropriate. What are the conditions, general and specific, responsible for these holdovers?

## C. STATISTICAL STUDIES

1. With Chap. XII of F. S. Chapin, "Cultural Change" as a methodological model make statistical studies of the growth of institutions you have access to.

a. The functions added to the government of your town or city in the last ten years.

b. The departments added to your college or university during the last twenty-five years.

c. The courses dropped from and added to the curriculum of your college or university.

d. The nations joining and severing their connection with the League of Nations since its inception.

e. The expansion of the local telephone company.

Account for these changes on sociological grounds.

2. By means of a questionnaire asking questions regarding marked changes in certain major institutions, estimate the general strength of the special attitudes and values lying behind the given contemporary institutions among a sample group of people. For example, in the case of the prevailing marriage institution ask questions involving such changes as are advocated by Lindsey and Evans in "Companionate Marriage." The same can be done in testing the hold of a form of municipal government, a denomination, an ethical code, upon a given group. Another way of obtaining the information would be to develop a series of pointed statements about the institution and ask that each be answered as to whether it was "true," "partly true," or "false."

3. Make a study of the efficiency of an institution judging this by its failures:

a. The relation of divorces to marriage in your county according to the records for a given period of time.

b. Study your religious denomination for an area for which data are available and note the lapses and additions of membership.

c. Examine one of your local industries for labor turnover.

d. Find the school in your city system that has the highest truancy and absence rates. Is it due to poor instruction and administration, or are other factors involved?

4. Draw up a score card for testing the general efficiency of institutions, keeping in mind tests of true function, quality of operation, efficiency of personnel, degree of public support, enforcement of ends, adaptability and flexibility in meeting new situations.

5. By means of this score card, have a selected group of individuals independently grade a well-diversified list of institutions, and compare the results.

6. By the use of your own score card or one from M. C. Elmer, "Technique of Social Surveys," 1927 Ed., score the efficiency of the specific institutions, such as banks, churches, grocery stores, schools, playgrounds, etc., of two selected areas in your town or city.

7. Formulate a questionnaire that will show the changes in the religious views of students during their college life year by year. What does this show concerning the effects of different institutions upon each other?

8. Graph and correlate over a period of years for a given town or city, the postal receipts or the bank clearings with the population changes. Explain the significance of the findings from the point of view of institutional theory.

9. Graph and correlate the annual precipitation in your state for a period of years with annual bank deposits. What does this show?

10. In order to show the quality of the influence of one of the great informative and recreational institutions of American life, compare the number of inches of space devoted in well-sampled issues of a widely circulated newspaper over a period of time to international news, national political and economic issues, crime, divorce and adultery, community advance and welfare, building, travel, lectures, sports, women's page, society news, etc. Evaluate each type of news material from the point of view of its constructive or destructive tendency.

11. On the basis of data collected among the families of a selected area, determine if there is (1) any correlation between home ownership and family stability, (2) between the number of moves families make and family stability, (3) between moves and quality of functioning of the families in the form of absence of truancy and delinquency among children, regularity of school attendance, adequate recreational, educational, and religious advantages for children, savings of parents, etc.

12. If your town or city is in the registration area, compare the number of births with the number of marriages over a period of years to determine the trend in the birth rate. Correlate both of these findings with the assessed valuation of property, with bank deposits, or with postal receipts for the period to show any relation between birth rate, marriage rate, and the economic trend of a community.

13. Ask fifty families that have been married ten years or more what factors have kept them from divorce. Why did they not separate? Count the number of factors mentioned and the number of times each was mentioned. Use these as the basis for a presentation of factors which give permanence to home life. Have as many of these as possible checked by other families. Which have the most weight?

14. Devise a means by which you can tell whether the people of a given city or area are taking more recreation than they used to.<sup>1</sup>

15. On the basis of a questionnaire distributed among all people who seem to be competently informed, from data regarding immigrant influxes, suit-case preachers, over-churching, and urban intrusion, and by the use of various local records such as farm sales, taxes, membership lists, population records, and improved road mileage, account for the death of the various rural churches that have ceased to function in a given area such as a county.

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgement is here made for much assistance rendered me by my colleague, W. G. BINNEWIES, in the preparation of exercises 6 to 14.



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